



Centre Declares Mirwaiz's AAC & Abas Ansari's JKIM Unlawful Associations Under UAPA

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, Mar 11, : The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Tuesday declared the Mirwaiz led Awami Action Committee, and Jammu and Kashmir Ittihadul Muslimeen (JKIM), led by Masroor Abbas Ansari, as unlawful associations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), citing thier involvement in activities detrimental to the sovereignty, security, and integrity of India.

In two separate official notifications, the MHA stated that JKIM and AAC and thier members have been supporting

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Committed to fulfill all promises made with people of J&K: CM Omar Abdullah

Announces constitution of CS-led panel to workout roadmap for daily-wagers

■ HT News Network/KNO

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today announced to constitute a committee under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo to devise a roadmap for the regularization of daily-rated wagers.

Replying to the discussion on Budget 2025, the Chief Minister said, "Through this House, I am announcing the formation of a committee under the Chief Secretary, with the Additional Chief Secretary to the CM, Commissioner Secretary GAD, Planning Secretary, and Law Secretary. Within six months, we will finalize a framework, determine the



exact number of daily wagers, and legally and financially assess how they can be regularized. Then, the policy will be discussed here in the next budget."

Speaking about the plight of daily wagers, the Chief Minister emphasized that this is not merely a financial issue but a humanitarian and social concern. Referring to the use of force against protesting daily wagers in Srinagar and Jammu, he remarked, "What happened to them yesterday, I do not want to repeat. But I must ask—why did the situation reach this stage?"

He recalled that during his previous tenure as Chief Minister, his government had

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Gol reiterates its commitment to make J&K terror free

MoS Home informs parliament about key measures to enhance internal security

■ HT News Network



New Delhi, Mar 11: The Government of India on Tuesday reiterated its commitment to make Jammu & Kashmir terror-free by eliminating terror networks,

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India has made rapid strides in healthcare in past 10 years: LG Sinha Inaugurates Shri Birendra Rai Hospital at Areraj, Motihari, Bihar

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today inaugurated the Shri Birendra Rai Hospital at Areraj, Motihari, Bihar.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated and extended his felicitations to the family members of Late Shri Birendra Rai and everyone associated with the hospital which will offer services in specialities, using latest cutting-edge healthcare technology.

"Shri Birendra Rai Ji's family has steered this esteemed institution for public service and care. I convey my good wishes to Shri Rajeev Kumar, Dr Sanjeev Kumar and his family for the dedicated service that they are doing," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor spoke on the rapid strides made by India in healthcare,



under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, in the past 10 years.

The Lieutenant Governor said, "Our innovations in technologies and treatment are

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Lieutenant Governor attends 'Holi Milan Samaroh' at Sendhwa, Jehanabad

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha attended the 'Holi Milan Samaroh' at Sendhwa, Jehanabad in Bihar today. Holi in Jehanabad is celebrated with gaiety and enthusiasm. The Lieutenant Governor extended his greetings and best wishes for a brighter future of all. In his address, the Lieutenant Governor spoke on the rich spiritual, educational and cultural heritage of Magadha. "Magadha region is the life element of our ancient culture."

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Protests in Assembly over LoP's remarks on July 13 Martyrs

■ HT News Network/KNO

Jammu, Mar 11: The Legislative Assembly on Tuesday witnessed protests from treasury benches as well as Kashmir-based opposition after leader of the opposition Sunil Sharma again called martyrs of July 13, 1931 as traitors.

During discussion on the budget, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer, NC legislator Showkat Hussain Ganie slammed BJP for what they have done in Jammu & Kashmir for the past few years and mentioned 1947.

As Showkat was speaking, BJP MLA Sham Lal Sharma asked him to talk about 1931. "They are our heroes," Altaf Kaloo of NC responded. Countering him, BJP MLA Sunil Sharma said that they are traitors and will

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Four Killed, Eight Injured as Tempo Plunges Into Gorge in Reasi

■ HT News Network

Reasi, Mar 11, : At least four people lost their lives, and eight others sustained injuries, when a tempo vehicle skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district early Tuesday morning, officials said. The accident occurred when the tempo, which was en route from Jammu to Bagankote, veered off the road, reportedly after the driver lost control. The vehicle rolled down into a steep gorge, resulting in the immediate death of four passengers, while eight others suffered varying degrees of injuries.

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Special Investigation Team Formed to Trace Two Missing Boys in J&K's Kathua

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 11, : Police have constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to trace two boys who went missing from Raj Bagh in Kathua district, even as senior officials assured their families of all possible efforts to locate them.

DIG Jammu-Kathua-Samba Range Shiv Kumar Sharma visited Raj Bagh and Marheen, where he met the families of the missing boys—Deenu (15) and Rehmat Ali (12)—and assured them that the police were working relentlessly on the case. DySP Border Dheeraj Katoch and SHO Raj Bagh Ajay Chib accompanied him.

The boys had gone for cattle grazing near Bhamberwan Goat Farm but never returned home. Their worried families reported the matter to Police Station Raj Bagh, submitting a written complaint. Acting on the report, police registered a formal case and started an investigation.

DIG Sharma directed officials to coordinate with police in Punjab, Jammu, and Udhampur to gather any possible leads. He also ordered the formation of dedicated search teams

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Each MLA to get Rs 3 crore as Constituency Development Fund Post creations excluded, Rs 20 lakh set aside for supporting Tribal, BPL communities

■ HT News Network//KNO

Srinagar, Mar 11, : The Jammu and Kashmir Government has decided to allocate Rs 3 crore annually for each Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) scheme.

This decision, according to the news agency—will enable MLAs to recommend and oversee the implementation of key development projects in their constituencies.

The funds will be used to support infrastructure development, public welfare projects, and essential services, with a clear focus



on ensuring the timely completion of all approved works.

The Finance Department has issued a detailed circular outlining the guidelines for the implementation of the CDF scheme. Under these guidelines, each MLA can propose development works worth up to 3 crore (300 lakh) annually to the District Development Commissioner (DDC) for execution in their constituency. Additionally, nominated MLAs have the flexibility to recommend projects in any part of the Union Territory.

The allocated funds are specifically designed for capital expenditure and cannot be used for

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IGP Kashmir Chairs Security Review Meeting at PCR Kashmir

■ HT News Network/ANB

Srinagar 11 March, : General of Police Kashmir Zone, V.K. Birdi-IPS, chaired a security review meeting at the Police Control Room (PCR) Kashmir. The meeting was attended by all range DIGs, District SSPs, SO to IGP Kashmir, JDP ZPHQ, SP PC Srinagar, and other senior officers.

According to Associated News Bureau, the meeting began with updates from the district officers on recent security trends, highlighting the importance of maintaining stability and readiness across the Kashmir Zone. The officers gave presentations outlining the evolving security landscape. The key discussions focused on the need for forward-thinking tactics, seamless intelligence coordination, and active public cooperation to ensure peace and security.

IGP Kashmir stressed the importance of closely monitoring anti-national activities and reinforcing territorial control across all districts. He urged officers to intensify area



domination exercises and night patrolling in vulnerable areas to fortify the security grid.

Addressing the operational side, IGP Kashmir emphasized the improvement of policing at the Police Station and Sub-Divisional levels, particularly in record building and investigations. He called for high-quality investigations and stressed the importance of consistent follow-up at the trial level.

The IGP also highlighted the importance of building better public relations and prioritizing people-sensitive policing. Addressing public grievances was identified as a top priority, alongside operational duties and crime-related responsibilities.

In conclusion, IGP Kashmir commended the officers for their dedication and

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Budget parroting "Naya Kashmir" narrative of BJP: Sajad Lone

Questions CM on source of funding of his election manifesto

■ HT News Network/KNO

Jammu, Mar 11: Peoples Conference president Sajad Gani Lone on Tuesday said the budget presented by chief minister Omar Abdullah is parroting "Naya Kashmir" narrative of BJP.

As per the news agency—speaking on the budget, Lone, who represents Handwara assembly segment, said the budget is parroting "Naya Kashmir" narrative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The Prime Minister's Development Package which was criticised by them has suddenly become transformational. Whatever they



(NC) have negated politically in the last five years has been praised in this budget," he said. Pointing to the NC and the opposition BJP, Lone said, "They (BJP) are praising Modi ji. They (NC) are also praising Modi ji. I don't know which praise is good."

Omar asked Omar Abdullah to disclose the scheme of funding for fulfilling his election promises, which, he

said, will require Rs 60000 crore.

"You are talking about Rs 60-65 thousand crore in the next five years. What is the scheme of financing? Where will you raise this money? Tell us where you will get this money. You cannot generate this money unless you have been promised a big package by the Centre," he said.

Sajad said that NC has failed to fulfil its elec-

toral commitments, including 200 free electricity units, one lakh jobs.

"There is no mention of free electricity units being restricted to Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries in NC manifesto. The promise was unconditional," he said.

Lone also questioned a six percent increase in asset monetisation.

"The budget shows asset monetisation rising from one percent in 2024-25 to seven percent now. What assets are being monetised? This House has a right to know, as seven percent is a massive sum," he said—

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I want people to keep our civilisational values alive: LG Sinha Felicitates recipients of ‘Bihar Kesari Samman’ Award at Patna

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today attended ‘Bihar Kesari Samman’ Samaroh at Patna and felicitated eminent personalities with the prestigious award for their distinguished services.

The award is given in the honor of Dr. Shri Krishna Singh, the great freedom fighter and first Chief Minister of Bihar.

The Lieutenant Governor paid tributes to Dr. Shri Krishna Singh and recalled his significant contribution to the development of Bihar and the nation building.

“Shri Krishna Singh was the creator of modern Bihar. By initiating agricultural reforms, river development projects in the first five-year plan and subsequently building the monuments of modern Bihar like Barauni Refinery, Heavy Engi-

neering Corporation, Barauni Fertilizer Plant, Barauni Thermal Power Station, Damodar Valley Corporation, Patratu Power Station, Scooter Factory, Garhara Locomotive Shed, First Railway and Road Bridge of Independent India Rajendra Setu, Netarhat School, Engineering Colleges in Muzaffarpur, Jamshedpur, Sindri, Gaya, Motihari etc., he made Bihar the powerhouse of the country’s progress.

Shri Krishna Singh was fondly called Shri Babu. His name is recorded in golden letters in the tradition of great personalities who were born in Bihar and dedicated themselves to nation-building. He laid the foundation for industries and infrastructure.

Shri Babu had independent consciousness right from his teenage years and I believe that it was this spirit which helped him become an embodiment



of good governance. During his tenure Bihar became one of the fastest developing states,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted public welfare and empowerment of poor and

underprivileged sections of the society by him.

“Shri Babu was a true statesman who worked hard to eliminate discrimination in the society and looked at Bihar in its entirety and created its new

existence through good governance. He was the harbinger of good governance. He worked hard for social equality and social unity and made it the most powerful state of the country.

Be it the abolition of the Zamindari system, making the poor and marginalised farmers self-reliant or the overall welfare of workers, Shri Babu was dedicated to the welfare of the people and liberated a large population from exploitation after independence,” the Lieutenant Governor further said. The Lieutenant Governor called upon the enlightened citizens and every section of the society, especially the youth to unite for the cause of public good and give new direction to India’s development journey.

“I want people to keep our civilisational values alive. History bears testimony to the fact that Unity always ensured progress and overall development.

We need to understand that those who pursue a divisive agenda want to divide us to stall the journey of Viksit Bharat. We must stand up as One and dedicate ourselves for growth and

prosperity of the nation,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor further emphasised that Rural India should be the focus for sustainable and equitable path of growth.

He said, “To accelerate socio-economic growth, we should focus on forging public-private partnerships. Our rich inheritance of values of harmony is a solid foundation of inclusive development. Today, we have to start thinking about the future of tomorrow that we want to build. Societal attitude needs to be changed towards the contribution in this journey. Holistic Development is a collective responsibility of the society”. He said, “To accelerate socio-economic growth, we should focus on forging public-private partnerships. Our rich inheritance of values of harmony is a solid foundation of inclusive development.

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FOUR KILLED

Local volunteers, along with police and rescue teams, rushed to the spot and launched an immediate rescue operation. The injured were quickly evacuated and transported to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. However, officials stated that the exact condition of the injured was not immediately known.

Reports suggested that the driver may have lost control due to the treacherous road conditions or over-speeding. The accident site, known for its sharp turns and steep slopes, has witnessed similar mishaps in the past.

Senior civil and police officials reached the spot to assess the situation. Efforts were underway to retrieve the wreckage of the vehicle and ensure there are no other victims trapped at the site. [KNT]

UNLAWFULL

militancy, propagating anti-India narratives, and mobilizing funds for separatist and unlawful activities in Jammu and Kashmir. The government accused these organizations of inciting public disorder, promoting hatred against the constitutional authority, and advocating secessionism in the region.

The notifications further alleged that AAC and JKIM have encouraged the use of arms to destabilize law and order, while also engaging in efforts to fuel discontent among the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The Centre warned that if the group’s activities were not immediately curbed, it would continue its anti-national agenda, including challenging Jammu and Kashmir’s accession to India and disrupting public order.

Citing these concerns, the government exercised its powers under Section 3(1) of the UAPA to officially ban these organizations. The order will remain in effect for five years from the date of publication in the Official Gazette, unless revoked or modified under Section 4 of the Act.

The move is part of the Centre’s continued efforts to crack down on organizations it deems a threat to national security and territorial integrity. [KNT]

CM

initiated a framework for regularizing daily wagers. However, he noted that the 2014 elections and the devastating floods had disrupted these plans. Taking a dig at the opposition, he questioned their inaction, stating, “What did you (the opposition) do? I reviewed past budget speeches from your tenure and found no mention of daily wagers except in the fourth budget speech, where you vaguely spoke about ‘sustainable livelihood’.” He further pointed out that even after the issuance of SRO-520, only 577 daily wagers were regularized.

Challenges in Regularization

The Chief Minister highlighted that, over the past decade, opposition which were in power then failed to address the issue, despite having both state and central authority. He accused them of prioritizing the 7th Pay Commission over the regularization of daily wagers, making the situation more complicated.

“Then came the J&K Reorganization Act, which effectively shut the door on their regularization. Now, we must reopen this issue. But in these years, their numbers have changed, making it difficult to determine an accurate count,” he said. The government must start from the scratch to resolve their concerns, he said.

Budget 2025: A Realistic approach, not pessimistic

Addressing criticism that his budget speech was pessimistic, the Chief Minister clarified that it was, in fact, realistic. “Some members termed the beginning of my budget speech as pessimistic. I believe it was not pessimistic; it was realistic.

I told the truth—I said my whole body has wounds. Pessimism would have been if I had said, ‘The body has so many wounds, death would be inevitable.’” Instead, he explained, “I said, ‘The body has so many wounds, and I don’t even have enough balm for them.’ This is not pessimism; this is our reality.”

He stressed the financial constraints facing the Union Territory, adding, “Do I have enough money to take all the power projects into my hands and start working on them? No. Can I provide free electricity to all the people? No. In today’s age, we don’t even have the budget to ensure 24-hour electricity for Jammu and Kashmir. We are forced to buy electricity. We have worked on increasing social benefits for the poor. But is this truly enough to meet their needs? No.”

Fiscal responsibility and future growth

Quoting an English saying, “Cut your coat according to your cloth,” the C

hief Minister explained the necessity of managing within available resources. “My words were not pessimistic; they were realistic. I presented the truth. We don’t have enough money, but we have prioritized welfare measures that will have a meaningful impact on the people.”

He acknowledged that the budget would not yield instant results but assured that his long-term growth had been set in motion. “This budget serves as our foundation. Over the next five years, we will build a strong and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.”

Opposition’s response and criticism

Responding to the opposition, particularly BJP members, the Chief Minister remarked that instead of focusing on the budget, their speeches were centered around Article 370, Maharaja Ji, and July 13.

“Initially, I thought his speech had substance, but in reality, there was nothing related to the budget,” he said, referring to a BJP legislator’s remarks.

A ‘Love Letter’ to the People of J&K

Addressing the interpretation of his budget speech, Omar Abdullah reiterated, “My budget speech is a love letter—to the BJP, to the PC, to the PDP, to the AIP, to Congress, to the CPI(M), to independent MLAs, and, above all, to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Why do we write love letters? To express love. And do we not love those who are in need? Through this budget, we have tried to extend that love by addressing their challenges and aspirations.”

“I am not ashamed to call it a love letter. In fact, for the next five years, we will continue writing such love letters—letters of commitment, of progress and of transformation for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.”

Acknowledging Central Government support

Responding to criticism about acknowledging financial support from the Centre, the Chief Minister stated, “The central government has extended financial support to us. Should I be ashamed to admit it? No, I will not. The reality is that we are not yet self-sufficient. We are not financially independent. That is our challenge. And that is precisely what we must work toward.” He stressed that Jammu and Kashmir had always relied on central funds, but the goal was to achieve financial self-reliance in the long run. “This is not a new struggle. Our past budgets reflect the same reality. But we aspire for more. We aim for a future where Jammu and Kashmir stands on its own feet.” To achieve this, the

government has focused on developing new tourism destinations, industrial estates, and encouraging start-ups and entrepreneurship.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes: A reality check

Dispelling the misconception that Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) are fully funded by the Government of India, the Chief Minister explained that the UT also contributes significantly. He cited the PM Golden Card, which covers only BPL families under central funding, while the remaining 18 lakh families are supported by the UT. Similarly, under the National Social Assistance Program, 1.43 lakh BPL families receive pensions from central funds, but 8 lakh additional pensioners are covered by the UT’s own resources. “These are not mere figures; they represent our responsibility toward our people.”

The Chief Minister emphasized that after years of struggle, the budget of Jammu and Kashmir was finally being discussed within J&K itself, instead of just being passed in Parliament. “This is an achievement in itself. Some may argue that we still do not have a government of our own. But let me remind them—this budget is for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and it is being debated where it truly belongs.”

Restoring people’s dignity and empowerment

He concluded by reaffirming his government’s commitment to restoring dignity, empowerment, and self-reliance for the people. “Some may see these initiatives as mere drops in the ocean, but history has shown that even the mightiest oceans are formed by countless drops.

With these small but meaningful steps, InshaAllah, in five years, we will restore the dignity of our people and build a financially self-sufficient Jammu and Kashmir.” “This is our vision. This is our commitment. This is our love letter to our people.”

Earlier, MLAs Qayser Jamsheed Lone, Showkat Hussain Ganie, Javed Iqbal Choudhary, Shagun Parihar, Abdul Majeed Larmi, Rafiq Ahmad Naik, Shabir Ahmad Kullay, Sajad Lone, Zafar Ali Khatana, Baldev Raj Sharma, Saif Ud Din Bhat spoke on the budgetary provisions on Tuesday and also put forth their views and suggestions.

GOI

dismantling financing mechanisms and preventing infiltration. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai, outlined key measures proposed in the Budget to enhance internal security, including steps specifically focused on J&K. “The government plans to modernize law enforcement by integrating new criminal laws into a digital system, enhancing crime prevention, and improving criminal investigations. Also, mobile forensic labs will be deployed in every district, and state forensic labs will be modernized to strengthen evidence-based policing,” the reply stated.

“To bolster cyber security, the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) will be expanded, along with cyber fraud mitigation centres and a National Cyber Threat Intelligence system to counter digital threats,” it added.

Border security is also a key focus, with plans for technological upgrades, including drone surveillance, advanced monitoring systems, and fencing along vulnerable border areas to curb infiltration. These measures, as part of a multi-pronged national security strategy, aim to enhance law enforcement capabilities and ensure long-term stability in J&K,” the reply said—(KNO)

HEALTH

rated amongst the best and our healthcare professionals have demonstrated excellence and they are competing with leading health institutions of developed countries.

The high standard of our care practices, along with equitable, integrated and people-centered, comparative cost advantages and efficient services have made India a favourite destination for medical treatment”.

In view of the emerging challenges in health sector, the Lieutenant Governor emphasised on paying special attention to developing specialised human resource, and extending quality and affordable medical care to all through a close collaboration between the public and private sectors.

“We should now focus on expanding the coverage of health services and giving access to affordable medical facilities to the people in far flung areas while ensuring quality service across a vast spectrum of healthcare,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

HOLI

It has a prominent place in the history of modern India due to its ancient tradition and cultural values and the invincible strength of this land adorned with the richness of philosophy, language and literature is guiding us.

From this holy land, the principles of industry, trade, commerce and urban development emerged and reached beyond the shores of India through scholars who came to Bodhi Gaya from all over Asia,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the people from all sections of the society to work together to revive the glory of ancient Magadha region.

“According to Vedic literature, there was ‘Magadha’ in the south-west, ‘Anga’ in the east and ‘Videha’ in the north. The first description is found in the 14th verse, 53rd Sutra of the third Ashtak of the Rigveda and it has been called by the name Keekat.

Many historians have also tried to highlight the fact that the integration of Vedic culture and Vratya culture first took place in Magadha. Along with this, the tradition of Rajrishi started from Magadha and the first was Rajrishi Vishwamitra,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted the dedicated efforts made under the guidance of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, for the inclusive development of Magadha region and the state of Bihar.

PROTEST

remain traitors, triggering strong protests from NC and Kashmir-based opposition parties. Amid protests over remarks of Sharma, CPI (M) leader Muhammad Yosouf Tarigami urged the Speaker to take note of his words.

“Derogatory remarks were used against Martyrs of 1931. 1931 Martyrs were called traitors. You are the actual traitors,” Tarigami said, pointing to BJP legislators.

Amid commotion in the House, MLA Langate Sheikh Khurshheed demanded expunging of remarks made by the BJP leader.

Later, the speaker expunged the remarks made by Sharma—(KNO)

MLA

revenue-related expenses, creation of posts, or payment of salaries. This ensures that the funds are spent on tangible developmental works.

Projects under the CDF must be completed within one year. In areas with limited working seasons, such as high-altitude regions,

the DDC, with the MLA’s approval, may extend the timeline, allowing work to be completed within two working seasons, but not exceeding two years.

The scheme encourages MLAs to recommend projects with costs not exceeding 10 lakh per work, although higher-value projects may be considered for certain infrastructure investments, provided they are completed within the specified time.

A wide range of development activities will be supported, including the construction and upgradation of government buildings such as schools, hostels, libraries, and sanitation facilities, as well as the provision of computers for educational institutions. The fund will also support the construction of roads, irrigation facilities, power infrastructure, and housing upgrades for the underprivileged.

The government aims to make a significant impact on the local infrastructure by allowing projects such as: Construction and upgradation of roads, including approach roads and link roads, with funding upto Rs 15 lakh. Projects for water table recharging, irrigation, and drainage, with support up to Rs 20 lakh.

Strengthening power infrastructure with a budget of up to Rs 50 lakh.

Assistance for housing upgrades for tribal and BPL populations, with funding of up to Rs 20 lakh for each project.

This initiative also focuses on improving rural areas by allowing the creation of kachha roads where local needs dictate.

To ensure proper utilization of funds, the scheme, as per KNO, includes provisions for strict oversight. Payments for completed works will be made only after the necessary verification and the successful completion of a Defect Liability Period (DLP), if applicable. The scheme, according to KNO, also emphasizes the importance of efficiency, requiring that at least 80% of the allocated funds be utilized within the financial year.

In cases where the prescribed threshold is not met, funds will be withheld until the target is achieved, and future allocations will be contingent upon meeting these goals.

Certain projects will not be eligible for funding under the CDF, including office or residential buildings for government departments, memorials, creation of posts, or any kind of revenue expenditure. The funds will not be used for works related to places of worship either.

By giving MLAs the autonomy to choose projects and ensuring proper monitoring, the CDF scheme aims to foster a more localized and responsive approach to development. This initiative represents a significant step forward in empowering elected representatives to directly contribute to the growth and well-being of their constituencies—(KNO)

KATHUA

and the circulation of the boys’ photographs to expedite their recovery.

The disappearance of the two minors comes just days after three locals were found dead in a deep gorge in the Billawar area, raising concerns among the residents. Authorities have urged the public to come forward with any information that might assist in tracing the missing boys. [KNT]

IGP

reiterated the collective responsibility to safeguard the region. He directed all attendees to submit follow-up action reports within a specified timeframe to ensure the effective implementation of the strategies discussed. (ANB)

EDITORIAL

NC’s flip-flop over distribution of 200 units of free electricity

The National Conference in its election manifesto for the 2024 union territory assembly elections had promised that once the party comes into power 200 units of free electricity would be given to the people. In the manifesto it was nowhere written that this facility would be provided to the people belonging to the lower strata of the society alone. Five months down the line the party has changed its stance on the issue and the same has not gone well with the people. Immediately after forming the government in October last year the party leaders and the ministers in the cabinet maintained that all the promises mentioned in the manifesto would be fulfilled. Addressing his maiden press conference in Srinagar in January chief minister Omar Abdullah had said that the government will provide 200 units of free electricity to the people who deserve it. He had also said that the same is possible only to the areas where the meters have been installed. In the 2025-26 union territory budget it has been envisaged that 200 units of free electricity would be provided to the people belonging to Antodaya Anna Yojna (AAY). It seems that people belonging to the AAY category are only the deserving ones and the rest of the people are well off at least economically. Since the chief minister has said that it is imperative to have meters first for the calculation of free units of electricity it remains to be seen how the government responds since the AAY people are primarily living in non-metered areas. It would be a herculean task for the officials of the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) to identify the AAY families and then calculate their monthly power bill as most of them come under the non-metered category. In the past the genuineness of many of the AAY families has been questioned by the common masses and it would be unfair if free units of electricity is provided to the people who don’t deserve the same. Across the Kashmir valley complaints of bogus AAY ration cards have been doing rounds for the past many years now. In such a scenario there are maximum chances that deserving people will be left out of the government scheme of providing free units of electricity to them. This whole process needs to be taken up in a meticulous manner and the government needs to extend the benefits to the other sections of the society.

MUDASIR MUSHTAQ KHAN
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The Arabic term Ramadan connotes intense heat. It indicates that in pre-Islamic Arabia, Ramadan was the name of a scorching hot summer month. In the Islamic calendar, however, the timing of Ramadan varies from year to year. Ramadan not only teaches us perseverance but has numerous benefits for our spiritual being. The Quran states that fasting was prescribed for believers so that they may be conscious of God (Allah). Ramadan is a period of fasting and spiritual growth and is one of the five “pillars of Islam” - the others being the declaration of faith, daily prayer, alms-giving and the pilgrimage to Mecca. Able-bodied Muslims are expected to abstain from eating, drinking and sexual relations from dawn to sunset each day of the month. Many practising Muslims also perform additional prayers like Taraweeh, especially at night, and attempt to recite the entire Quran. Besides some believers observe Atikaf- a meritorious voluntary act to stay in the mosque, especially on the last ten days of Ramadan and engage in God’s worship and win His blessings. Ramadan is having a profound impact on our spirituality, particularly given the physical hardships that it entails. The most distinct feature of Ramadan is that it requires the able Muslims to fast the entire month. The fact that this distinct feature correlates with the auspiciousness of the month is perhaps a testament to how important and beneficial fasting is. Indeed, the activity entails immense spiritual benefits that lay the foundations for the spiritual uplift we witness during the month. Since we are often unaware of these bene-



fits, this article aims to briefly introduce how, ironically, fasting is food for the soul.

It weakens your NAFS (SELF)

According to the Sufi philosophies, the “NAFS” in its unrefined state is “the ego”, which they consider to be the lowest dimension of a person’s inward existence—his animal and satanic nature. The “NAFS” is the component of an individual that compels them towards their animalistic desires. Each individual is responsible for controlling and overcoming these desires. Imam Ghazali writes that physical easements are the source of strength for the Nafs,

including food and drink. The logical conclusion, therefore, is that depriving the physical body of food and drink would weaken the Nafs, and hence its ability to invite the individual towards evil and sin.

Since good deeds enhance one’s spirituality and bring them closer to Allah (SWT), it is quite understandable that fasting entails a great degree of spiritual benefit, particularly with regards to weakening your ability to sin.

It strengthens your “SOUL”

Keeping up with the first point, weakening the Nafs would naturally mean strengthening the soul, since it is the

vehicle through which an individual is inclined towards good deeds and hence towards developing a stronger relationship with Allah (SWT). This is why you feel that heightened sense of closeness to Allah (SWT) during Ramadan; your soul no longer has to battle your nafs in the desire to do good, and it is empowered by the fast, hence the increased willingness to do good.

It brings you closer to your “THOUGHTS” and “EMOTIONS”

You have probably felt an overarching sense of calm and serenity during Ramadan. Quite often, even though the raging hunger of a long fast

bothers us, we are calmed down by an overbearing sense of peace. These emotions are the direct impact of a closer connection to Allah (SWT). This calmness also allows us to be better attuned to our own thoughts and emotions, since we slowly drift away from the hurry and fuzz of worldly desires.

It relieves you of worldly “DESIRES”

It is quite often the case that individuals refrain from all things that invite them towards sin during their fast. The natural response is that if one is making an effort to please Allah (SWT), one best not infect that effort by engaging in activities that breed evil and sin. We try to refrain from anger and from expressing our base instincts during Ramadan for this very reason, the natural result of which is a sort of deviation from the traditional chase of our worldly desires and aspirations. Fasting allows us to be more cognizant of ourselves and our actions, which in turn makes us more aware of the unnecessary pursuit of material and inconsequential gains.

In conclusion, while there are immense, visible physical benefits of fasting, the spiritual side of the activity often goes unnoticed. Imam Ghazali and others have spent a great deal of time and effort in outlining these benefits for the Ummah, which just goes on to show how the soul is often neglected in our conception of the world. Let this Ramadan be a portal for a great cognizance of the soul and its role in developing our connection with the Almighty.

The writer is a former Attorney at Law at the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. He is currently pursuing an MA in Political Science through IGNOU

Bridging Gaps, Building Futures: Educational Reforms in J&K

How Infrastructure Expansion, NEP 2020, and Digital Initiatives are Changing the Landscape

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Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed significant educational reforms and initiatives aimed at enhancing literacy rates, promoting skill development, and ensuring access to quality education for all. These efforts are transforming the educational landscape and empowering the youth of J&K with opportunities for personal and professional growth. One of the cornerstone initiatives has been the expansion of educational infrastructure. Approximately 50 new degree colleges have been established in Jammu and Kashmir, significantly improving access to higher education. This surge in higher education infrastructure is complemented by the establishment of premier institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu and the expansion of Central Universities in the region. These developments have strengthened higher education infrastructure, providing students with world-class learning opportunities. In addition to expanding higher education, the government has also focused on enrolling out-of-school children. Over 45,000 out-of-school children have been enrolled, with a special focus on girls’ education. This initiative not only addresses the issue of educational disparities but also promotes gender equality by encouraging female enrollment. The emphasis on girls’ education is further reinforced by initiatives like the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao program, which

aims to improve the child sex ratio and empower girls in the region. The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a paradigm shift in the Indian education system. Replacing the 34-year-old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, the NEP 2020 is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Built on the pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability, the policy aims to transform India into a global knowledge superpower. Key features of NEP 2020 include a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure to ensure holistic development, the introduction of vocational education from Class 6 onwards, emphasis on multilingual education, and modern teaching methodologies. Jammu and Kashmir is among the first regions to implement NEP 2020, aligning with national standards and promoting holistic development. To effectively implement NEP 2020, the PM SHRI Schools initiative was launched. This scheme aims to upgrade over 14,500 schools across India, including those in J&K, to serve as exemplars of high-quality education. These schools focus on modern infrastructure, technology integration, environmental sustainability, and inclusive learning environments. In Jammu and Kashmir, 426 schools have been selected under this initiative, providing leadership in their regions by offering equitable, inclusive, and joyful learning environments. The initiative includes provisions for pre-school education, child-friendly furniture, smart classrooms, fully equipped labs, and well-equipped playgrounds. Other significant initia-

tives include the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, a centrally sponsored scheme that focuses on improving the quality of school education. It emphasizes strengthening school infrastructure, enhancing teacher training programs, and promoting inclusive education for all students. The Mid-Day Meal Scheme has been extended to J&K to provide nutritious meals to school children, addressing malnutrition and encouraging school attendance. This initiative not only improves health outcomes but also reduces dropout rates by providing incentives for children to attend school regularly. The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) provides vocational training and skill development programs to enhance employability among J&K’s youth. This initiative is equipping young people with the skills needed to thrive in a competitive job market. Additionally, the Watan Ko Jano Programme aims to familiarize J&K’s youth with India’s cultural diversity and development through educational tours, fostering national integration and a sense of belonging. To bridge the digital divide, the government has introduced several digital education initiatives. These include the provision of tablets, laptops, and access to online learning platforms like SWAYAM and DIKSHA. These platforms support e-learning and digital literacy, ensuring that students in J&K are not left behind in the digital age. The Prime Minister’s Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS) provides financial assistance to students from J&K for undergraduate studies across various disciplines. Additionally, scholarships for minor-

ity students, including Pre-Matric and Post-Matric scholarships, are supporting education for underprivileged communities. The promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education is preparing students for future technological advancements and innovation-driven careers. This focus on STEM is crucial for building a skilled workforce capable of contributing to India’s growth story. The Naya Jammu and Kashmir Initiative is a broader developmental agenda focusing on youth empowerment through education and skill-building. By implementing educational reforms and providing world-class learning opportunities, the initiative is paving the way for a brighter future for the region. In recent years, Prime Minister Modi has highlighted the transformative changes in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in education and youth empowerment. He expressed satisfaction in seeing 50,000 students who had been forced to leave school now returning to education. The introduction of pre-primary classes in 15,000 schools has benefited over 1.5 lakh children, further expanding educational access. The upgradation of 250 schools to PM SHRI Schools and the establishment of new degree, engineering, and political science colleges have enhanced educational infrastructure. Additionally, significant advancements in the medical field include the addition of 1,100 new seats, along with 1,500 in nursing and 1,600 in paramedical programs, providing the youth of J&K with greater opportunities to pursue higher education and professional

careers. The BJP government’s vision for education in Jammu and Kashmir extends beyond these achievements. The Sankalp Patra, the party’s election manifesto, ensures comprehensive support for education at every level. It promises the modernization of over 23,000 government schools and colleges, equipping them with advanced technology, online learning platforms, and free Wi-Fi access. Additionally, the manifesto commits to launching Mission Praveesh, a focused literacy initiative aimed at ensuring foundational literacy and numeracy by 2030. This education drive will see the upgrading of all 28,178 existing Anganwadi’s into Saksham Anganwadi’s, transforming early childhood education. Scholarships, free transportation, and hostel facilities for economically weaker sections (EWS), girls, and differently-abled students will be prioritized, creating a level playing field for marginalized communities. In a region striving for better educational prospects, these initiatives mark a pivotal moment in securing the future of Jammu and Kashmir’s youth. The commitment to establishing new institutions, including a Tribal University in Rajouri-Poonch and a Sharda University in Kashmir, further underscores the government’s focus on creating opportunities for students from every corner of the Union Territory. As Jammu and Kashmir continues to emerge as a hub of education in the country, the government plans to add 1,000 new seats to government medical colleges, provide tablets and laptops to students in remote areas, and create scholarships and free transportation ser-

vices for disadvantaged students. The impact of these educational reforms has been transformative, not only in Jammu and Kashmir but across India. The Modi government has implemented a range of initiatives to improve the quality and accessibility of primary and secondary education. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government launched the PM e-Vidya channel to facilitate remote learning for school students. Furthermore, significant budgetary allocations have been made to enhance infrastructure, digital literacy, and teacher training programs in schools across the country. Initiatives such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) aim to bridge gaps in access and quality, ensuring that no child is left behind. In essence, the reforms in primary and secondary education under the Modi government represent a paradigm shift towards transformational change. By leveraging technology, enhancing infrastructure, empowering teachers, and promoting inclusivity, these reforms are reshaping the educational landscape of India, unlocking the potential of millions of young minds, and driving the nation towards a brighter, more prosperous future. As India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi looks forward to a third consecutive term, significant educational reforms are expected in the next five years, further solidifying his vision for a more enlightened and inclusive future in education.

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‘Supporting Jammu and Kashmir’s Artists with Fair Compensation and Recognition’



MOHD. YASEEN

The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL) holds a distinguished position in the region, revered for its pivotal role in preserving and promoting the cultural and artistic traditions of Jammu and Kashmir. It serves as a platform for artists, writers, musicians, and performers, ensuring that the region’s rich and diverse heritage continues to thrive. The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages is instrumental in supporting artists, offering them opportunities to showcase their work, fostering creativity, and maintaining the region’s cultural vibrancy.

However, despite its invaluable contributions, there remains a pressing issue that cannot be ignored—the inadequate financial compensation provided to those who dedicate their lives to the arts. Artists, writers, and cultural workers associated with the academy continue to grapple with meager remuneration that does not reflect the value of their work or their contribution to society.

The artist fee, at a mere

Rs.1,350 per performance or contribution, stands as a glaring reflection of the disparity between the cultural and artistic value of work and its financial recognition. In the current economic climate, where the cost of living is rising steadily, this fee is simply insufficient to sustain an artist’s livelihood. Basic necessities, including food, housing, and healthcare, have seen significant price hikes, making it increasingly difficult for many artists to make ends meet. The fee of Rs. 1,350 might have been more acceptable in the past, but it is no longer in tune with the economic realities of the present. This problem is symptomatic of a broader trend—artist and cultural workers are often overlooked and undervalued, despite their crucial role in shaping the intellectual and creative fabric of society.

The disparity between the remuneration of artists and that of salaried professionals is particularly striking. While employees in the government and corporate sectors benefit from regular pay raises and other financial perks, artists, who are vital to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, do not receive the same treatment. Government employees, politicians, and bureaucrats regularly see their salaries adjusted to keep pace with inflation, while the artists who breathe life into the art and culture of the region remain stagnant in their financial struggles. Similarly, employees in the private sector are granted

annual appraisals and bonuses as a way to reward their performance and to adjust their earnings to reflect the realities of the economy. However, artists are left without a structured framework for ensuring fair and consistent compensation.

The profession of an artist is inherently unstable, with many facing uncertainty in terms of income and opportunities. Most artists dedicate years, if not decades, to mastering their craft, but financial security often remains elusive. The nature of artistic work means that it is project-based, with performances, exhibitions, and contributions occurring sporadically rather than regularly. This unpredictability makes it difficult for many artists to plan for their future, pay their bills, or support their families. The fee of Rs. 1,350 per performance is grossly inadequate in such an environment. Even with a substantial number of performances, an artist would find it challenging to generate a sustainable income. This constant financial insecurity leads to a range of unfortunate consequences: artists are forced to take on secondary jobs unrelated to their passion or creative practice, hindering their ability to fully invest time and energy into their art.

The economic strain also has wider implications for the cultural landscape. When artists are financially stressed, their ability to create, innovate, and contribute to the arts is compromised. Creativity flourishes in an environ-

ment of stability and security. Yet, when basic financial needs are not met, artists are left unable to dedicate themselves fully to their craft. This not only harms the individual artist but also affects the cultural output of the region as a whole. A lack of financial support stifles the potential for growth and innovation within the artistic community, limiting the richness of cultural experiences that can be shared with the wider public.

It is time for a structured revision of artist fees. Artists, like other professionals, must be able to rely on periodic fee increments that reflect changes in the economic environment. Just as government employees and corporate workers receive pay raises to match inflation, artists should be granted the same privilege. A reasonable starting point would be to institute a minimum 10% fee increase every year. This would provide artists with a basic level of financial security and enable them to focus on their creative endeavours without the constant worry of financial instability. The value of an artist’s work should be reflected in their compensation, and this adjustment would be a step in the right direction toward ensuring that artists can maintain their livelihoods while continuing to contribute to the cultural and intellectual life of the region.

Additionally, the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL) may look to the fee

structures of National Academies as a reference point for their own fee structure. By considering the fee models and financial frameworks of established cultural institutions, the JKAACL can ease the process of implementing fee hikes, aligning them with broader national standards. This approach would not only ensure that artist remuneration keeps pace with the growing cost of living but also allow JKAACL to be more in tune with the needs and expectations of the artistic community.

In addition to increasing the artist fees, there are other ways the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages can provide financial support to artists. The creation of grants and fellowships specifically designed for artists in need would be a significant step in this direction. Such funding could be awarded to individual artists or collectives to help them pursue specific projects or cover their living expenses while they focus on their work. Fellowships could also provide opportunities for artists to collaborate with national and international institutions, fostering cross-cultural exchange and expanding the reach of Jammu and Kashmir’s cultural heritage beyond regional boundaries.

Furthermore, the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages could explore the introduction of a pension system for senior artists. Many veteran artists, who have dedicated their

lives to preserving and promoting the cultural traditions of Jammu and Kashmir, face financial hardship in their later years. A pension system would offer them the support and dignity they deserve after decades of service to the arts. Such initiatives would not only help senior artists but also demonstrate a broader commitment to the well-being of the entire artistic community.

Finally, exploring alternative revenue sources could provide the academy with additional funds that could be used to support artists financially. The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages could consider organizing ticketed cultural events, paid workshops, and other cultural activities that generate income. Collaborations with national and international cultural institutions could also serve as a means of bringing in additional revenue while simultaneously increasing the visibility of Jammu and Kashmir’s artistic traditions on the global stage. These initiatives would not only provide much-needed financial support but would also help to expand the reach of the region’s cultural offerings, allowing for greater recognition and appreciation of the rich heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.

Investing in the arts is not just an investment in individual artists; it is an investment in the cultural and intellectual growth of society. The preservation and promotion

of cultural heritage are fundamental to a society’s identity and well-being. If the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages is to continue its vital role in safeguarding the region’s artistic traditions, it must address the financial insecurity that too many artists face. Providing fair compensation, introducing support mechanisms such as grants and fellowships, and exploring alternative revenue streams are all steps that can help ensure the survival and thriving of Jammu and Kashmir’s vibrant artistic community.

Creativity cannot thrive when its practitioners are burdened by financial distress. The survival of cultural traditions depends on the well-being of the artists who bring them to life. The time has come for the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages to recognize the importance of ensuring fair compensation for the region’s artists. Only through such recognition will the academy truly fulfill its mission of promoting and preserving the rich cultural heritage of the region. Let us ensure that the creators of tomorrow are supported today, so that Jammu and Kashmir’s cultural legacy can continue to flourish for generations to come.

(The Writer is a National Scholarship and Fellowship Holder in the Field of Theatre from Ministry of Culture, Government of India who can be reached at yaseensalaria@gmail.com)

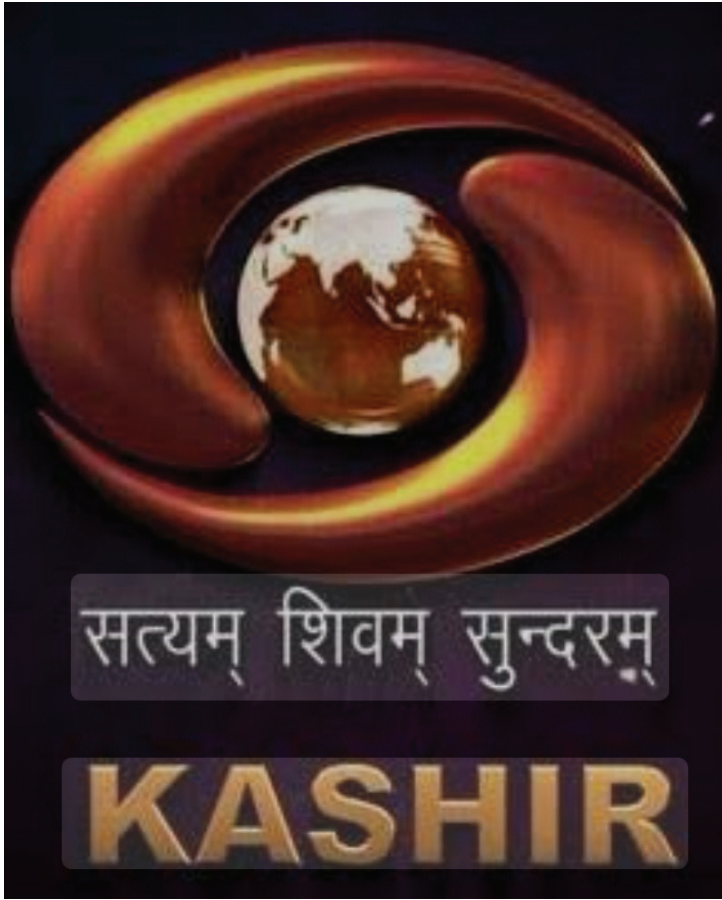
Why the Distance of the DD Kashir?



GULAM BARJI

HARWAN SRINAGAR

Programs are telecast in different languages around the world on various channels that people watch and like. These programs include the latest news around the world, current affairs, children and youth programs, women’s programs, various religions programs, entertainment programs, sarcastic programs, sports programs, health-related programs and many other programs. Here in our country, in every state, Doordarshan Kendra has established various channels based on various programs in local languages, which telecast differently in local language’s and through these programs regional language’s as well as the culture of different provinces of the country and our country has a new culture to move from this country to this time. Local artists are given the opportunity to keep the culture alive. In the same way, the culture of Jammu and Kashmir is gaining worldwide and to keep this traditional culture alive, With such efforts, the culture of our country is still alive and provides local artists in these programs to keep this culture alive. In the same way the cultural of Jammu and Kashmir is gaining worldwide and the artists of Jammu and Kashmir have worked hard to keep this traditional culture alive for which Doodarshan Kendra Srinagar, who has also provided jobs to local artist’s has pro-



moted the culture of the year to keep the culture here in the year 2000. With the establishment of this DD Kashir channel hundreds of local artists here joined the channel and was involved in delivering sarcastic and entertainment program’s to the public. This was the period when the situation in Kashmir worsened and there was such an atmosphere of fear and fear that no one was involved in radio or television programs with a lot of fun. Wait and maintain the radio structure in the audience and the audience along with television. In the same period thanks to radio and television many artists in the valley became popular overnight although many of these artists

are no longer in this world but many artists are still struggling to end when the remote tours will end and we will again make fun of the common people and other fun. Although today is the era of social media and even today people are enjoying the programs of sarcasm through various channels made on social media but there is a difference between the sky and social media. When there was television in the village city or neighborhood, people had television but when Doordarshan added local artists in various sarcasm and entertainment programs people bought television with loans was it not a success for the remote?But where hundreds of local artists became

unemployed after the sudden closure of Doordarshan millions of audiences of Doordarshan were away from Doordarshan. Renowned local artists like Sheikh Tariq Javed, Makhan Lal Saraf, Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan, Dr. Ayash Arif, Zameer Ashaye, Kusum Dhar, Qazi Faiz, Mushtaq Baqal, Mushtaq Neka, Gul Javed Khan, Zahoor Zaidi, G.M Wani, Yousuf Shahnaz, Ab. Majeed Wani, Arif Zeeshan, Gul Riyaz, Shahid Gulam, Seth Rafi, Hassan Javed, Mir Mushtaq, Farhat Siddiqui, John Majrooh, Jahangir Farash, Hakeem Javed, Nazir Harbol extra should work to sell any goods on the footpath? Is this not their dishonesty? Isn’t this an infamous stain on their reputation and popularity? If the local artists of this state are given continuous work in every state of the India why lose the work of the artist affiliated with the Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar ‘DD Kashir’? There is no denying that there is no shortage of talents here but the young man wants to connect with the DDK but by the distance of Doordarshan he goes away from the Doordarshan. Thus every state has its own culture and the artists of this state work day and night to keep this culture alive but when these artists are deprived of work then what can we expect to keep the culture alive. The culture is alive when an artist has to work for a long time. And other dignified and lesson-based program’s have to be resumed and take the initiative to prevent non-standard content shown on social media. Hopefully the distance of Doodarshan Kendra Srinagar will end very soon and the old era will start again so that the old artist’s as well as new artist’s will be given the opportunity to connect to DD Kashir.

Automatic Mutation Of Land Records: A Necessity Of The Present Era

MOHD AMIN MIR

The Karnataka government has resolved to implement automatic mutation of land records from Wednesday, March 13, 2024, with the primary objective of eliminating the role of intermediaries and sparing landowners the ordeal of frequenting the offices of tehsildars.

Revolutionizing Land Record Management

Experts from the IT sector have divulged that automatic mutation shall be effectuated in cases pertaining to land mortgages for bank loans, property division, land acquisition, and court-mandated directives.

Approximately 72% of alterations in land records, particularly in Pahani/RTC (Record of Rights, Tenancy, and Crops), will transpire autonomously, devoid of human intervention. Under the prevailing system, modifications in Pahani necessitate the biometric authentication of revenue inspectors. The advent of automated mutation will obliterate such procedural impediments, ensuring that all modifications in RTCs are meticulously documented on the designated digital portal.

Limitations of Automatic Mutation

Scrutinizing the modifications executed in RTCs over the past six months, experts have observed that while 72% of changes are seamlessly automated, the remaining 28% necessitate manual intervention. Certain transactions—sale deeds, partition deeds, inheritance matters, guardianship of minors, and disputed land cases—remain beyond the ambit of automation. In such instances, applicants are accorded a 15-day notice period for requisite processing.

Mitigating Bureaucratic Redundancies

The introduction of automated land record mutation is poised to eradicate the protracted bureaucratic formalities, alleviate the workload of officials, and dismantle

the entrenched network of intermediaries. This progressive initiative will substantially curtail the necessity of physical visits to tahsildar offices, thereby enhancing administrative efficacy.

Mandatory Functioning of Sub-Registrar Offices on Sundays

In a parallel development, the government has mandated the operation of sub-registrar offices within urban municipal jurisdictions on Sundays. In each city corporation, one sub-registrar office will function on a rotational basis, catering to the exigencies of both public and private sector employees.

Given that numerous employees grapple with weekday constraints, this initiative shall facilitate their ability to undertake property registrations and other official procedures on Sundays. However, only individuals with prior appointments shall be granted access to these offices.

Karnataka boasts ten city corporations. Bengaluru has already witnessed Sunday operations in sub-registrar offices. Nevertheless, public response has been tepid, largely attributable to inadequate dissemination of information. To ameliorate employee welfare, those assigned Sunday duty shall be compensated with a week-day off, preferably on Tuesdays, given that property registrations are relatively sparse on that day.

A Paradigm Shift in Land Governance: Need for Nationwide Adoption

While Karnataka spearheads the transition toward technologically driven land governance, our revenue department has also witnessed commendable advancements. The implementation of the “Aap Ki Zameen, Aap Ki Nigrani” initiative has digitized land records, making them readily accessible through a citizen-centric online portal. The successful execution of this monumental task merits accolades for the entire revenue department, particularly the patwaris and the Financial Commissioner (Revenue).

IUST Hosts One-Day Seminar on Conservation, Cultivation, Processing, and Entrepreneurship Development in Medicinal Plants

HT News Network

Awantipora, March 11: The Department of Environment, Sustainability, and Climate Change (DESCC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), in collaboration with RCFC-II, SKUAST-Kashmir, organized a one-day seminar on Conservation, Cultivation, Processing, and Entrepreneurship in Medicinal Plants. The event focused on sustainable management, entrepreneurial potential, and livelihood opportunities, with a special emphasis on students, particularly female students.

Prof. Sheikh Bilal Ahmed, Regional Director, RCFCNR-II, Govt. of India and chief guest

of the seminar, emphasized the urgent need to conserve medicinal plant biodiversity and integrate traditional knowledge with modern scientific advancements to promote sustainability in the herbal sector.

Dr. Shakir Sultan Scientist, CSIR-IIIM, Srinagar, an invited speaker from the Indian Institute of Integrated Medicine (IIIM), provided valuable insights into the bioactive compounds of medicinal plants and their commercial applications, underscoring the importance of scientific research and value addition in promoting the medicinal plant industry.

Prof. Parvez Ahmed Mir, Director, Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (CIED), IUST, delivered a special address, highlighting entrepreneurial opportunities in the MAP sector and the role of industry-academia collaboration in fostering innovation and commercialization of medicinal plant-based products.

Prof. Humayun Rashid, Professor of Practice, and Dr. Aabid Hussain Shalla, Dean, School of Sciences, IUST, interacted with participants and underscored the need for capacity



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essor of Practice, and Dr. Aabid Hussain Shalla, Dean, School of Sciences, IUST, interacted with participants and underscored the need for capacity

building in medicinal plant biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods, urging young researchers and entrepreneurs to explore the vast potential of the medicinal plant sector.

Earlier, welcoming the participants, Dr. Dharam Chand, Organizing Secretary of the seminar and Coordinator, Biodiversity and Aroma Park, IUST, stressed the importance of the sustainable utilization and conservation of medicinal plants in Jammu & Kashmir. Dr. Sumira Nazir Zaz, Coordinator, Department of Environment, Sustainability, and Climate Change, & Member, Women Entrepreneurship Development Cell, proposed the vote of thanks. The seminar

was moderated by Dr. Yasir Altaf, Assistant Professor, Department of ESCC.

The seminar saw overwhelming participation from students, researchers, and faculty members, engaging in discussions on advanced cultivation techniques, conservation strategies, value addition, and policy frameworks supporting medicinal plant-based entrepreneurship. The seminar saw overwhelming participation from students, researchers, and faculty members, engaging in discussions on advanced cultivation techniques, conservation strategies, value addition, and policy frameworks supporting medicinal plant-based entrepreneurship.

اطلاع عام

ہر خاص و عام کو اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ مجھے عمر فاروق ثور اینڈ ٹول کی رجسٹریشن محکمہ ثور از م پھلگام کرانی مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر اسسٹنڈ ڈیرکٹر ثور از م پھلگام کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بعد از معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہوگا

المستہتر

فاروق احمد وانی ولد محمد مقبول وانی
ساکن بٹہ کوٹ پھلگام کشمیر

اطلاع عام

ہر خاص و عام کو اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ سکول رکاڈ مین میری والدہ کا نام رومی جان انراج ہوا ہے جب کہ میری والدہ کا اصلی نام رومیہ رحمان ہے اب اس کی دستگی کرانی مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر امامیہ پبلک سکول صوفی پورا کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بعد از معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہوگا

المستہتر

سینج حابیل ربانی ولد سینج شہناز اکبر
ساکن ہر دوکھٹ ول رحامہ تحصیل سار پھلگام

اطلاع عام

ہر خاص و عام کو اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ میرے بنک اکاؤنٹ زیر نمبر 0122040100004347 غلام حسن ٹیڈہ انراج ہوا ہے جب کہ میرا اصل نام مطابق ادھار کاڈ غلام حسن گوجر ٹیڈہ ہے اب اس کی دستگی کرانی مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر جے کے بنک پھلگام کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بعد از معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہوگا

المستہتر

غلام حسن گوجر ٹیڈہ ساکن
لدر پھلگام کشمیر

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Arifa Jan W/o Javid Nisar Sofi R/o Watergam Wagoora, shop Located at Watergam Wagoora. i Am Applying for pesticides license with title Name FARMERS CLINIC. If any person having any objection may file the same at Plant protection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar within a period of 07 days from the publication of this notice, After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name. Arifa Jan
W/O: Javid Nisar Sofi
R/o: Watergam Wagoora

BJP J&K Holds Key Meeting with New District & Constituency Presidents in South Kashmir.

HT News Network



Anantnag, March 11: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K today convened a crucial meeting at Dak Bunglow, Anantnag, with newly appointed district presidents, constituency presidents, and former district presidents of South Kashmir. The meeting was presided over by BJP General Secretary (Organisation) J&K Ashok Koul, who provided strategic guidance and motivation to party leaders in the region. During the meeting, Ashok Koul emphasized the party's commitment to strengthening its base at the grassroots level and ensuring active public outreach. He urged the newly appointed leaders to work diligently in their respective areas, address public grievances, and promote the party's vision for development and good governance in Jammu & Kashmir.

The discussions covered key political and organizational matters, including the roadmap for upcoming elections, strengthening booth-level management, and enhancing party cadre coordination. The leaders also deliberated on the various developmental initiatives undertaken by the BJP-led government and the need to effectively communicate them to the people.

The participants expressed their commitment to working towards the welfare of the people of South Kashmir and ensuring that BJP continues to grow as a strong political force in the region.

The meeting concluded with a pledge to uphold the party's principles and work relentlessly for the empowerment and progress of the people of Jammu & Kashmir. The discussions covered key political and organizational matters, including the roadmap for upcoming elections, strengthening booth-level management, and enhancing party cadre coordination. The leaders also deliberated on the various developmental initiatives undertaken by the BJP-led government and the need to effectively communicate them to the people.

The participants expressed their commitment to working towards the welfare of the people of South Kashmir and ensuring that BJP continues to grow as a strong political force in the region.

Viksit Yuva Samelan- Y20 Summit Held Shri Ram School

HT News Network

JAMMU MARCH 10: The Shri Ram Universal School, in collaboration with the Nations Development Association (NDA), affiliated with MYBharat-NYK under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, successfully organized the 'Viksit Yuva Samelan' under the Y20 Summit with the theme "Shared Future: Youth in Democracy and Governance." The event aimed to empower young minds by fostering discussions on democracy, governance, and leadership, providing a platform for youth to engage with experts, policymakers, and industry leaders.

The seminar commenced with a warm welcome note presented by the Principal of The Shri Ram Universal School, Ms. Sonika Mahajan. The event was graced by Ms. Sunaina Mehta, Principal, Revenue Training Institute, as the Chief Guest. Shilpa Dubey, DDC Member Vijaypur, attended as the Special Guest, further adding significance to the occasion. The esteemed panel of experts included Aijaz Qaiser (Joint Director, Tourism), Anissa Nabi (Senior Project Manager, J&K Rural Livelihood Mission), Ekshu Sharma (District Information Officer), Dr. Akshay Parihar (BDO Khellani), Maansi Gupta (Director, MG Design), Jasleen Kour (Founder & CEO, Branding Elves), Abheet Sangotra (Youth Advisory Council



Member), and Apurv Gupta (Director, JKMS).

Prominent speakers such as Heena Mahajan (Writer and Co-Convenor of Duggar Baradaari- Team Jammu), Sannak Shrivats (State Secretary, ABVP), Ananya Manyal (Production Strategy Head, The Unheard Mehfil Podcast), Dheeraj Sharma (Social Activist), Sunita (Assistant Professor), Dr. Swati Mahajan (Medical Officer, RBSK), Sahil Bharti (Advocate), and Tabassum Nabi (BSc Nursing) shared their invaluable insights on the role of youth in democratic governance. Throughout their speeches, speakers and panelists highlighted the significance of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing their relevance in governance, leadership, and youth engagement.

The event was further enriched by the presence of esteemed delegates, including Preeti Choudhary, Narinder Singh, Tarun Uppal, Rahul Kumar, and Rakshant Balotra and Sahaj Sabharwal, who contributed to the

meaningful discussions on youth-led development.

Adding to the grandeur of the occasion, the Chairman of The Shri Ram Universal School, Mr. Sanjeev Mahajan, and Director, Ms. Rajni Gupta, graced the event with their esteemed presence. The seminar witnessed enthusiastic participation, with around 200 young individuals attending as an engaged audience.

The event concluded on a high note with a Vote of Thanks delivered by the Headmistress, Ms. Shivani Vaid, and the Chief Functionary of the NDA, Mr. Sushil Singh Charak. Their words of gratitude acknowledged the collective efforts of all dignitaries, panelists, speakers, and the young attendees in making the event a resounding success.

The 'Viksit Yuva Samelan' stood as a testament to the power of youth in shaping a participatory and inclusive democracy. Through insightful discussions and knowledge-sharing, the event inspired young leaders to take an active role in governance.

Forest Department launches sale of conifer plants

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 11: J&K Forest Department launched sale of conifer plants for the general public, here today to enhance the tree cover outside forests which include Towns, Urban and Peri-Urban areas of Kashmir Valley. The sale was inaugurated by Conservator Forests, Srinagar Circle, Tawheed Ahmad Deva at Sheikhbagh Forest Complex, Srinagar. The event was attended by forest officials and officers including Divisional Forest Officer, Urban Forestry Division, Srinagar Dr. Sheikh Mehraj and DFO Planning and Publicity Division. Speaking on the occasion, Conservator Forests, Srinagar Circle highlighted the need for intensive plantation and emphasised planting indigenous species of conifers including Deodar, Kail and Fir. He underscored the role of the public for helping the Forest Department to increase the green cover especially outside forests.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of general public that i want make date of birth certificate of my son mamely murtaza shafi dar s/o mohammad shafi dar R/o kripal garh matipora birth of date 19-06-2021. he born at home if anybody have any objection regarding this contact BDO singpora. No objection can accepted after time of 7 days.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDARK REERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of AAIRA JAN D/O GHULAM RASOOL SHAH R/O BOCHU Tehsil PATTAN Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 25/05 /2022 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

Chairperson DDC Kulgam vows support for specially-abled children

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, MARCH 11: Chairperson District Development Council (DDC) Kulgam, M Afzal Parray today presided over the Environment Building programme on Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs (CWSN). The event was organized by the Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) Kulgam in collaboration with the Chief Education Officer (CEO) Kulgam at the DIET building, here. The programme saw the participation of several officials, including the Principal of DIET Kulgam, Principal of HSS Malwan, and other dignitaries from DIET Kulgam. Discussions focused on the challenges faced by differently-abled individuals and the need for stronger educational support. Speaking at the event, Chairperson DDC raised various concerns regarding the education and well-being of differently-abled children. He emphasized the government's role in ensuring their welfare and urged parents to support and encourage their children rather than discriminating on ability. Highlighting the crucial role of teachers, he stressed the importance of inclusive education in shaping the future of such children. He assured that, as Chairperson of the DDC, he remains committed to taking all necessary steps for their betterment, pledging to leave no stone unturned in advocating for their rights and opportunities.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDARK REERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertainingto Birth of JUNAID AHMAD MIR & SUFIYASHOWKAT S/O SHOWKAT AHMAD MIR R/O HARNOW KAWCHAK Tehsil TANGMARG Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/05 /2014 & 08 /05/2019 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION ANANTNAG

FRESH NIT 119 (2nd Call of NIT 106) OF R&B/Anantnag/2024-25 /E-TENDERING/ 12884-93 DATED 10-03-2025
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT of J&K, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Anantnag invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from the Divers Association / State Motor Garage / NGOs/Agencies/Consultancy Agent/Public Private Partnership firms/Individuals, under (Single cover system) for allotment of Contract for Hiring of vehicle 01No for a period of 01 Calendar Year which can be extended depending on the performance of successful Bidder.

S. No	Name of item	Max Estimated Ceiling Amount (Monthly Basis) In Rs	Cost of tender Documents (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit(In Rs)	Class of Contractor/Bidder
1.	Hiring of 01 light Vehicle (Toyota Innova Crysta) 2020 or above Model for official Purpose of Superintendent Engineer PWD(R&B) Department Circle Anantnag H.Q Khanabal (with Driver). However, fuel shall be provided by the department, as per approved Government norms.	Rs 46000/- (Forty Six Thousand Only)	Rs 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred Only)	Rs 5000/- (Rupees Five Thousand Only)	Registered Tour and Travel Operators/ Registered Sumo/Taxi Stand Owners./Travel Agents/ Consultancy Agent/Public Private Partnership firms/Individuals

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per below schedule.

S. No.	Particulars	Dated
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	10-03-2025
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 10-03-2025 (03:00PM) To 31-03-2025 (04:30PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 10-03-2025 (03:00PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 31-03-2025 (04:30PM)
5	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	01-04-2025 (11:30AM)

DIPK-12877/24
Date: Mar 11 2025

Executive Engineer
R&B Division Anantnag

Water resource infra in Sopore to get major overhaul: Govt

Rs 44.85 cr allocated for modernization of Zaingeer canal, Rs 16.89 cr for Ningli Nallah flood protection

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 11 (KNO): Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday revealed its plan for a major infrastructure boost for water resources development and flood protection in Sopore constituency with over Rs 60 crore worth projects either under execution or in the pipeline.

Responding to a query raised by MLA Sopore, Irshad Rasool Kar, the Minister I/C Jal Shakti Department, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), informed that flood

protection and modernization works have been approved, aiming to enhance water flow capacity, reduce flooding and improve water resource management in Sopore constituency.

The Minister revealed that a flood protection project for Ningli Nallah has been recently approved under NABARD, with a total cost of Rs 16.89 crore, of which work is currently under execution.

Regarding the modernization of Zaingeer Canal, the government has prepared a Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Rs 44.85 crore, which is awaiting NAB-



ARD funding. For Pohru Nallah, the Minis-

ter informed that one flood protection work has already

been completed under Flood Management Programme

(FMP) Phase-II, while another is under execution under the UT Capex budget. Additionally, a survey has been completed for Khursi Nallah downstream National Highway, and a DPR is being framed accordingly.

The Minister also informed that, under the FMP Phase-II, an expenditure of Rs 75.00 lakh was incurred on Pohru Nallah, and Rs 101.00 lakh on Ningli Nallah. Additionally, under the UT Capex budget, Rs 35.00 lakh has been spent on Pohru Nallah, and Rs 38.37 lakh on Ningli Nallah besides that, Rs 90.00 lakh was spent under NABARD funding for the Ningli Nallah works.

Under the M&R (Maintenance & Repair) fund, Rs 15.00 lakh was spent on Pohru Nallah, and Rs 10.00 lakh on Ningli Nallah besides, Rs 16.10 lakh was utilized under PRI grants for the same, the Minister informed.

Addressing the sustainability of water sources, the Minister stated that the DPRs are based on detailed surveys, ensuring that the source water quality meets BIS 10500 standards. Furthermore, the projects have been designed with Rapid Sand Filtration Plants (RSFP) to ensure clean and sustainable water supply in the region—(KNO)

DC Kulgam reviews progress of works under JJM Emphasizes on functional audit of all completed schemes; directs service facilitation among different departments

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, MARCH 11: In order to take stock of progress achieved under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the district, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a meeting of concerned officers of the Jal Shakti Department at mini-secretariat, here. During the meeting, DC reviewed both the physical and financial progress of the works being executed under the Jal Jeevan Mission in the district.

The S.E Hydraulic Circle Anantnag gave a detailed brief of all the works under execution under Jal Jeevan Mission in the district.

It was informed that under the JJM, the district has a total of 143 schemes encompassing 219 works, with 149 works already completed till date. Emphasizing the importance of JJM as a flagship program aimed at covering all households, officers were instructed to work in coordination



to ensure the smooth execution of JJM works in their respective areas by the DC. The chair was apprised of various issues regarding testing and commissioning of Rapid Sand Filtration Plants of different water supply schemes. It was given out that water supply schemes including Boh-Dragdan, Parigam, Ahmadabad and Shalipora Tarigam are to be made functional before the end of this financial year. The DC instructed the concerned to ensure timely completion and

target achievement under Jal Jeevan Mission. He emphasized on the functional audit of all completed schemes, besides sought service facilitation among the different agencies completing the schemes.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Altaf Ahmad; SE PHE Mechanical Anantnag, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti Kulgam, Qazigund, Ground Water Div, Mechanical, KPDC, Quality Control & Procurement, CEO, AEEs and other officers.

DC Budgam conducts spot inspection of ongoing dev. projects

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, MARCH 11: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo today conducted a field review of various ongoing developmental projects at the District Headquarters.

DC reviewed the ongoing construction of the Court Room, Public Waiting Room and Electric Control Room along with other allied works at the District Headquarters.

The works on all the projects are going on at an accelerated pace and have reached their final stages.

The DC instructed the executing agencies to maintain the momentum and ensure completion with full compliance to safety standards and quality.



He also inspected the Sheikh-ul-Alam Skill Centre and said that since the construction work is completed the centre will be made functional soon.

The upgraded hall will serve as a hub for skill development and capacity-building programs for the youth of Budgam.

During his visit to the Old DC Office Complex, the DC expressed satisfaction

with the progress of renovation work, which is also nearing completion. He reiterated the importance of preserving the structure while ensuring its functionality to cater to the needs of public in the district.

The DC further inspected the Public Toilet Complex, where the construction work is almost completed. He stressed the

need for ensuring accessibility, cleanliness, and proper maintenance once the facility becomes operational for the benefit of visiting public and to provide improved sanitation facilities.

These projects will improve infrastructure and public services, making daily life easier for residents. They will enhance facilities, ensure better accessibility, and address community needs, he said.

By upgrading essential services, they will contribute to the district's overall development. The goal is to create a more efficient and well-equipped environment for the public, added DC.

Besides, ADDC, ADC, ACR, CPO, Dy. DEO, JE R&B and other concerned officials were also present on the occasion.

DC Kulgam reviews PMMVY scheme; directs expediting Aadhaar seeding of pending beneficiaries

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, MARCH 11: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Tuesday reviewed the progress of the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) in a meeting with Officers at the mini-secretariat, here.

While reviewing the scheme, DC directed the ICDS department to expedite the Aadhaar seeding of the pending beneficiaries at the earliest.

He stressed collaborative efforts of field staff at block level to get all the eligible beneficiaries enlisted in the scheme.

It is worth mentioning that PMMVY is a centrally sponsored scheme under Poshan Abhiyan under which financial support is being provided to lactating mothers.

The meeting was attended by DPO ICDS, all CDPOs, District Lead Bank Manager, DIO and a representative from LIC.

Mega enrollment drive conducted at in Shangus

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, MARCH 10: As part of the ongoing district-wide Enrollment Drive, a Mega Enrollment drive was successfully conducted on Day 4 at two different venues in Zone Shangus High School Chowgam (Cluster HSS Chittergul) and Higher Secondary School Chaklipora (Cluster Chaklipora).

The campaign was graced by Chief Education Officer Anantnag, along with Principal GHSS Nowgam, ZEO Shangus, Headmaster HS Chowgam, Headmaster HS Brimmer and other Heads of Institutions and officials from Cluster Chittergul, Cluster Chaklipora, CEO Office Anantnag, and ZEO Office Shangus.

During the drive, a significant milestone was achieved with the on-spot enrollment of more than 150 students, marking a remarkable response from the community. The initiative aims to enhance educational outreach and ensure maximum student participation in government schools.

The Education Department, Anantnag, remains committed to expanding access to quality education and urges parents to take advantage of this drive to secure a bright future for their children. The Education Department, Anantnag, remains committed to expanding access to quality education and urges parents to take advantage of this drive to secure a bright future for their children.

Entrepreneurship Development Program for Women Held at CIED, IUST

■ HT News Network

Awantipora, March 11 – The Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (CIED), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organized an Entrepreneurship Development Program for Women today. The program aimed to empower and guide aspiring women entrepreneurs by providing insights into various opportunities available in the entrepreneurial landscape.

Ms. Khairull Nissa, Executive Director at World Trade Center Services, New Delhi, was the keynote speaker for the session. Addressing the participants, she sensitized them about the vast avenues in the field of entrepreneurship and encouraged them to take advantage of the resources and



support systems available for women entrepreneurs. She emphasized the importance of innovation, networking, and resilience in building successful enterprises.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Parvez A Mir, Director CIED highlighted the university's commitment to supporting women entrepreneurs through various training programs, mentorship initiatives, and incubation support. He reiterated that IUST is dedicated to fostering a culture of

entrepreneurship that is inclusive and sustainable. Dr. Ruheela Hassan, Coordinator, Women Entrepreneurship Development Cell, IUST, stressed the need for creating learning skills to be adaptable in an ever-evolving business environment.

The event concluded with an interactive session where participants had the opportunity to seek guidance from the speaker and explore pathways to transform their business ideas into successful ventures.

EJAC Vice President Farooq Khan Welcomes J&K CM Omar Abdullah's Commitment to Address Daily-Wagers' Concerns

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, 11 Mar, 2025: Mechanical Irrigation & Flood Control Employees Federation (MI&FCEF) Chairman and EJAC Vice President Farooq Ahmad Khan has welcomed J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's commitment to fulfilling election promises and addressing the long-pending issues of daily-wagers in Jammu & Kashmir. Reacting to the CM's announcement in the Assembly regarding the high-level committee led by the Chief Secretary to work out a roadmap for regularization, Khan expressed cautious optimism but stressed the need for time-bound action.

In a statement issued to the press, Farooq Khan said "Daily wagers, casual labourers, and seasonal employees have been toiling for years without job security. While we welcome the CM's assurance, we urge that this committee functions with urgency and delivers concrete results. Thousands of families are waiting for justice."



He further emphasized that past governments have ignored this pressing issue, leaving these employees in financial distress despite their decades of service. "Daily wagers are the backbone of essential services

across all government departments in Jammu & Kashmir, ensuring public welfare despite difficult conditions. We expect the government to prioritize their regularization rather than delaying it with committee formations," Khan added.

He also met with Irrigation & Flood Control Kashmir Chief Engineer Er. Sanjeev Malhotra to discuss their concerns and seek necessary action on their demands. Farooq Khan has also appeal to Jal Shakti Minister Javed Ahmed Rana and Chief Engineer I&FC Er. Sanjeev Malhotra to play a proactive role in resolving the concerns of Irrigation and Flood Control Department employees in their respective capacities.

Khan further urged all MLAs across party lines to support this cause and ensure that the voices of these employees are heard in the Assembly.

"This is not a political issue; it is about fairness and justice for thousands of workers who have served the people of J&K with dedication. We hope the government will honor its commitment without delay," he concluded.



MLA Bandipora Nizam-ud-din Bhat Raises Concern Over Wular Lake's Deterioration, Calls for Immediate Action

■ HT News Network

Bandipora, March 11: MLA Bandipora Nizam-ud-din Bhat has expressed dissatisfaction over the government's replies to his questions in the Legislative Assembly regarding the conservation of Wular Lake. The government established the Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA) to oversee the lake's protection but effective measures were not implemented in previous years, leading to the current crisis. Bhat stressed the urgent need for concrete steps to preserve Wular's ecological balance and support those dependent on it. In response to Bhat's question, the government acknowledged that Wular contributes nearly 60% of Kashmir's fish production. However, the fishermen population lacks proper infrastructure and basic amenities. The deterioration

of Wular has directly impacted fishermen, affecting their livelihoods. Bhat stressed the need for focused development efforts in both urban and Wular-adjacent areas. He urged the government to expedite Wular's restoration and ensure fishermen receive necessary support. He expressed hope that strong policy decisions and timely action will help revive the lake and safeguard livelihoods.

With Wular's critical role in Kashmir's ecosystem and economy, Bhat's appeal has brought renewed attention to the urgency of preservation efforts.

DC Udhampur reviews performance of banks at DLRC & DCC meeting

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MARCH 11: To assess the performance of banks for the quarter ending December 2024, the District Level review Committee cum District Consultative Committee meeting was held today chaired by Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai here in the Conference Hall of DC Office Complex.

The meeting was attended by bankers and district officers from stakeholder departments.

A detailed discussion was held on several key issues, including the issuance of Kisan Credit Cards, sector-wise lending in priority and non-priority sectors, the bank-wise position of deposits and advances, special credit facilities for street vendors, the district's financial inclusion plan, and the implementation of the Stand-Up India Programme launched by the Prime Minister.

Speaking at the meeting, the Deputy



Commissioner emphasized the need to organize financial literacy awareness camps in coordination with various departments across all blocks of the district to ensure that maximum benefits reach the grassroots level.

She directed the bankers to consult the concerned departments before rejecting any sponsored loan cases, as these departments act as a bridge between beneficiaries and banks, facilitating smoother loan approvals.

She urged the bankers to proac-

tively reach out to stakeholders and ensure timely financial assistance, particularly to uplift the socio-economic conditions of the underprivileged sections of society.

The DC also instructed officials to adopt a public-friendly approach and work in close coordination to achieve the desired results at the grassroots level.

She directed officers to activate their field staff to identify left-out farmers and enhance awareness about various government schemes.

DC progress of District Capex Budget works in Kathua

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, MARCH 11: District Development Commissioner Dr Rakesh Minhas today chaired a meeting of district officers to assess the physical and financial progress achieved under the District Capex Budget 2024-25. The meeting was held in the conference hall of the DC office.

Chief Planning Officer Ranjit Thakur, Chief Education Officer, Chief Medical Officer, Executive Engineer RDD, Executive Engineer Irrigation and other district officers attended the meeting.

At the outset, CPO Ranjit Thakur briefed the DC about the status of the projects initiated under the District Capex Budget across different sectors.

The DC conducted a detailed review of the ongoing projects and instructed the executing agencies to expedite the progress of work to ensure time-



ly completion. He emphasized that all works allotted under the Capex Budget must be finished within the stipulated timeline.

Highlighting the crucial role of each department, the DC stressed the need for dedicated efforts at the ground level to ensure effective execution of development projects. He directed

officers to focus on quality asset creation and urged executing agencies to conduct regular site visits to ensure work standards are maintained.

The DC further instructed all district officers to strictly adhere to deadlines to prevent liabilities from being carried forward to the next financial year.

International Women's Day celebrated at GGM Science College

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Women Empowerment and Development Cell of Government Gandhi Memorial Science College celebrated International Women's Day under the patronage of the Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta and the guidance of Prof. Yasmeen Mughal, Convener of the Cell.

The event, centered on this year's theme "Accelerate Action," aimed to highlight the significance of women's empowerment and the need for progressive change in society.

Secretary, J&K Advisory Board for Development of Pahari Speaking People (Now PEG) Sapna Kotwal was the Chief Guest.

The programme com-



menced with a formal welcome address by Prof. Yasmeen Mughal, who emphasized the role of education in empowering women.

The College Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta, in his address, appreciated the Committee for organizing the event. He encouraged students to actively participate in initiatives promoting gender equality and creating an inclusive environment for women.

The highlight of the event was a Symposium in

which ten speakers across semesters expressed their views on the theme in Dogri, English, Hindi, and Urdu, showcasing their progressive thoughts and linguistic and intellectual diversity. The symposium provided a platform to young minds to engage in meaningful discussions on women's empowerment.

An Art Exhibition was also organized by the Cell displaying a range of artworks, posters, collages made by talented students Mohd. Zaigham Salaria and Ishit Kaur.

Div Com felicitates women leaders, achievers as Jammu University hosts Shakti Parv to mark Int'l Women's Day

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar today attended 'Shakti Parv' organised by the Department of Journalism and Media Studies University of Jammu, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) to commemorate International Women's Day.

On the occasion, women leaders and achievers from different walks of life were felicitated, honouring their strength, resilience and achievements across different fields.

The event also brought together distinguished speakers, scholars, and students to engage in thought-provoking discussions and storytelling sessions, emphasizing the pivotal role of women in the society.

Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar was the chief guest,



while Devyani Rana was the special guest.

In his address, the Divisional Commissioner highlighted the challenges women face due to societal biases at different stages of life.

He emphasized the urgent need to break these deeply ingrained stereotypes and urged the audience to ensure that women's empowerment is not just acknowl-

edged for a single day but is reflected throughout the year in societal attitudes and actions.

Many women speakers also voiced their views. Devyani Rana shared her journey of breaking stereotypes in the media industry and spoke about the representation of women in the media industry. She also emphasized the need for diverse voices in storytelling,

which is an important part of journalism.

Earlier, welcoming the participants, Head of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies Prof. Garima Gupta highlighted the significance of the event, stating, "Shakti Parv is a tribute to the indomitable spirit of women who continue to inspire change and challenge societal norms and also the men who play a pivotal role in women empowerment. It is only the synergy of both that can create a truly empowered society as a whole."

Regional Director IGNCA Shruti Awasthi said, "Women have always been the driving force behind societal progress, and Shakti Parv is a tribute to their unwavering strength, creativity, and leadership. Through cultural narratives and academic discussions, we aim to highlight their invaluable contributions and inspire future generations."

DC reviews progress of work on Jal Jeevan Mission Projects in Poonch

■ HT News Network

POONCH, MARCH 11: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, today chaired a crucial meeting to review the progress and implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) projects in the district.

At the outset, the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department Poonch presented updates on both financial and physical progress achieved under the Mission.

The discussions focused on the ongoing water supply schemes, including the current status of mechanical, civil, and electrical works, as well as the progress of borewell installations, tank construction, and pipe network installations. Comprehensive reports on sub-division



and scheme-wise analyses were also reviewed.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officials to conduct on-site inspections of water supply schemes, incorporating geo-tagging for accurate record-keeping. He

emphasized the need to assess work quality and identify barriers affecting the progress of ongoing schemes. Highlighting the significance of JJM as a flagship program, the DC urged executing agencies to demonstrate dedication in ensuring the smooth execution of projects in their respective areas. He stressed the importance of collaboration among the Jal Shakti Department, contractors, and other stakeholders to overcome any challenges.

The meeting concluded with a directive for timely completion and target achievement under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

The meeting was attended by SE Hydraulic Poonch, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Executive Engineer Ground Water, Executive Engineer JPDC, along with AEEs and JEs of Jal Shakti and Mechanical Sub-divisions.

GCOE Jammu concludes Int'l Women's Day events; Organizes Road Safety awareness rally

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: The SPARSH Committee of Government College of Education (GCOE) Jammu, in collaboration with the Psychological Counseling Cell, organised a series of events from March 7th to 11th to commemorate International Women's Day. The activities featured awareness lecture aimed to raise awareness on "What is SPARSH?", by its convener Dr. Davinder Kour; a symposium on the impact of sexual harassment on mental health; a poster-making competition focusing on sexual harassment against women and its legal consequences; a short film, "Astiva", emphasizing women's empowerment.

At the closing event the College Principal Dr. Jyoti Parihar appreciated the enthusiastic participation of students and commended the efforts of the SPARSH



Committee and Psychological Counselling Cell for successfully organizing these events, which played a crucial role in promoting awareness, empowerment and safety among students. Meanwhile, the Road Safety Club of the College organized an awareness rally on the theme "Road Safety Rules." The event aimed to emphasize the significance of road safety and responsible behaviour among commuters. The rally witnessed active participation from students and faculty members, who marched with banners and placards displaying messages promoting safe driving practices.

KIWG Day 03: Army, Himachal display marvelous performance, dominate opponents

■ HT News Network

GULMARG, MARCH 11: With couple of inches of snow during the night, technical actions over the peaks of Kangdoori to prevent avalanches and dense fog tested the patience of athletes on Tuesday who were eager to display action while sports lovers & spectators were ready to witness thrill of KIWGs.

The 3rd Day of Winter Games cleared the smoke for medal tally to decide which states or organization will gather maximum medals.

Top contenders from previous day were Army, Ladakh & Maharashtra but the five events scheduled for the

day had left competition open to all in national games event at Gulmarg.

With gradual opening of games, the needle of medal tally began to incline towards Army as their team dominated Men's Ski Relay Event and raced to Gold while Uttarakhand team scaled Silver, Himachal Pradesh team walked for Bronze medal in the competition.

The Slalom Snowboard event for Women held at Kangdoori saw thrilling contest among the participants. Himachal Pradesh was crowned with Gold & Silver but missed hat-trick of medals as bronze went to Maharashtra. The podium crowned Preeti Thakur as Golden Girl, Prakarti Thakur as Silver Girl both Himachal



girls, while Urmila Pable of Maharashtra took pride in bronze.

Excited with the Gold, Preeti Thakur said that she enjoyed the competition & KIWG 2025. She appre-

ciated the facilities and the support extended by the officials & staff.

The Nordic Ski Sprint Women was again dominated by Kusum Rana of ITBP, who won second Gold today

while three-time Gold Medalist of KIWG Bhavanj Thekkada from Karnataka did a late come back in this competition to obtain Silver. The Bronze was claimed by non other than Selma Soreng from ITBP, who slid a step down comparing to her yesterday's performance.

For the Men's event of 15km Nordic Sprint there were no surprises when Army is in competition. Army proved iron will & grit bundling all three coveted medals as Sunny, Stanzin & Thupstan won Gold, Silver & Bronze respectively. What is actually surprising take of event was that Army decimated all competitors and got top twelve positions in the event and the streak was only broken by ITBP.

In Alpine Slalom women, Himachal Pradesh players swept medals with Anchal Thakur, Tanuja Thakur & Promila Thakur winning Gold, Silver & Bronze medals.

Deputy Director General, Sports Authority of India, Vineet Kumar while speaking regarding KIWG said the games had been tremendous success as Sports Authority of India and J&K Sports Council have done marvelous job to conduct games efficiently & smoothly despite the weather conditions like fog which reduces visibility.

He lauded the coordination of officials, technical staff, participants and other stakeholders for befitting facilities.

Rs 16.89 cr flood protection works for Ningli Nallah under execution: Jal Shakti Minister

Rs 3.80 cr spent on maintenance, upkeep of Nallahs in Sopore Constituency

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana, today informed the House that flood protection works worth Rs. 16.89 crore, approved under NABARD for Ningli Nallah, are currently under execution.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by Irshad Rasool Kar in the Legislative Assembly.

The Minister informed that a DPR for an amount of Rs. 44.85 crore has been prepared and shall be part of the shelf of projects to be taken up under NABARD funding for modernization of Zaingeer Canal. Besides, one work has been completed under FMP Phase II and one work is under execution under UT Capex.

He said that the survey for framing of DPR for the Khursi Nallah D/s National Highway (Sopore constituency) has been



completed and DPR will be framed accordingly. He informed that WSS Zaingeer, WSS Shiva (proposed) and WSS Saidpora (pro-

posed) are partly dependent on Zanageer canal as the source, WSSs Mazbugh, Check-pora Nowpora, Nowpora Kalan, Bohri-

pore Sheeraz Colony, Bohripore Hamdanabad and Sidiq Colony and Model Town, Wadoora and Nathipora are dependent on Pohru Nallah as the source while WSSs Takiybal Wagub (under execution) and Sharkwara Rural are dependent on Ningli Nallah as the source.

He said that the DPRs are based on a detailed survey that included assessment of quantum and quality of the source. He said that in these schemes, provision of rapid sand filtration plants has been kept to meet the BIS 10500 quality parameters. Besides, surface water has been taken as a source that has sufficient discharge capacity thus ensuring sustainability.

While sharing details of expenditure, the Minister said that an amount of Rs. 3.80 crore has been expended for maintenance and upkeep of various Nallahs of Sopore Constituency under various schemes like FMP Phase II UT Capex, M&R and PRI grants besides NABARD.

Rs 143 cr Tawi River Front Project to be completed by April 2025: Javed Rana

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana, today informed the House that the Tawi River Front Project (Phase 1) shall be completed in April, 2025 with an allotted cost of Rs 143.00 crore.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by Arvind Gupta in the Legislative Assembly.

He informed that 96 percent and 94 percent physical progress has been achieved on the left bank and right bank of the river respectively.

Regarding the Tawi Barrage works, the Minister said that the works have been taken up with an estimated cost of Rs. 64.80 crore and Rs. 36.15 crore have been expended, so far. He said that 85 percent of the works of Tawi Barrage and Artificial Lake stand completed.

The Minister said that in order to prevent the direct drain discharge into the Ranbir Canal, a detailed DPR for an amount of Rs 34.06 crore has been prepared for execution of 10 works.

2 WSSs worth Rs 106 cr under execution in Tosamaidan areas: Javed Rana

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 11: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana, said that two Water Supply Schemes, taken up under Jal Jeevan Mission at an estimated cost of Rs. 1060.89 lakh, are presently under execution for providing potable water supply to Habbar, Lassipora and Tosamaidan areas.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by Saif-ud-din Bhat. The Minister said that an amount of Rs. 7.80 crore has been expended so far, which included Rs. 7.27 crore incurred on procurement of pipes for utilization in these schemes.

The Minister further informed that Khanpora village falls under the WSS Iskenderpora Lolipora, being executed under NABARD at an estimated cost of Rs. 6.78 crore against which an amount of Rs. 3.80 crore has been expended till date, including Rs. 3.44 crore incurred on procurement of pipes.

The Minister further informed that there are five filtration plants taken up under JJM in Khansahib Constituency, which are at different stages of completion. He said that the completion of all these schemes and the filtration plants will depend on the availability of funds under CSS and corresponding UT components.

DDMA Samba plans wide-ranging measures to reinforce disaster readiness

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, MARCH 11: The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Samba today chalked out a comprehensive plan to reinforce readiness, including constitution of a specialized disaster response force.

A crucial meeting, chaired by District Magistrate Rajesh Sharma, brought together key officials and stakeholders to formulate a coordinated approach to disaster mitigation and emergency response.

Key outcomes of the meeting included directives to all departments to conduct regular mock drills to test emergency response protocols, comprehensive review and necessary amendments to existing disaster management plans, discussions on forming a specialized disaster response force for the district, mandates for departments to develop detailed disaster mitigation and response strategies.

The DDMA's proactive approach reflects its commitment to safeguarding lives and infrastructure in Samba district against potential natural and man-made disasters.

"We are taking concrete steps to ensure that Samba is prepared for any emergency situation," added the DM. "By strengthening our coordination mechanisms and community awareness initiatives, we aim to build a disaster-resilient district."

The meeting saw participation from senior officials including Additional District Development Commissioner Champa Devi Thakur, Additional Deputy Commissioner Jagdish Singh, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Kusum Chib, Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Tehsildars, and representatives from essential departments such as Health Services, Fire and Emergency Services, Forest, PDD, PHE, Police, SDRF, NDRF, Flood Control and Security Forces. The meeting saw participation from senior officials including Additional District Development Commissioner Champa Devi Thakur, Additional Deputy Commissioner Jagdish Singh.

DC reviews Social Welfare initiatives in Poonch

■ HT News Network

POONCH, MARCH 11: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today reviewed the functioning of the Social Welfare Department here at meeting, focusing on the execution of key schemes aimed at enhancing community welfare.

At the outset, District Social Welfare Officer Wakeel Ahmed Bhat presented a comprehensive overview of the Government's welfare initiatives including National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), Integrated Social Security Scheme (ISSS), Sukanya Samridi, Scholarship Scheme, Marriage Assistance Scheme (SMAS) etc.

The Deputy Commissioner assessed the overall status of social welfare schemes, taking stock of the number of beneficiaries. He urged the Social Welfare Department to promote these schemes actively to ensure that all eligible individuals can benefit.

He sought special focus on protection of Child rights and close check on child abuse. Calling for holding awareness camps regarding women-centric schemes and the One Stop Centre, he emphasized the need to share helpline numbers with the public for better outreach.

The DC called for a thorough evaluation of the total number of pensioners receiving Old Age Pension, Widow Pension, and Disability allowances.

The meeting was attended by District Social Welfare Officer, Chairperson CWC, TSWO, Administrator one Stop Centre, District Coordinator DHEW, District Coordinator besides other concerned.

DC reviews progress under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 11: A review meeting to assess the progress of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana was chaired today here by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan.

At the outset, engineers from the Jammu Power Development Corporation Limited (JPDC) informed that over 8,000 consumers have registered for the scheme, with 2,550 applications already received. Additionally, it was reported that 180 applicants have successfully availed bank loans to install solar setup for electricity.

Expressing concern over the slow installation and insufficient manpower deployed by the Vendors, the Deputy Commissioner directed the JPDC authorities to organize seven-day training program at ITI to train the students for the task.

"The initiative aims to engage the youth, providing them with skills that will make them self-reliant and earn a livelihood, while also contributing to the success of the scheme," he



added. The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Kishtwar, Shah Nawaz Bali, Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs) of the Power Development Department (PDD), Electric Division JPDC Kishtwar, along with registered empaneled vendors, including M/s Mallik Solar, AD Agency, M/s Nehru Solar Solutions, M/s Sanjeet Sharma, M/s Adil Butt and M/s Aditya. A review meeting to assess the progress of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana was chaired today here by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan.

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DC Ramban reviews performance of Banks at DLRC meeting

Stresses on financial inclusion, women & youth empowerment

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN, MARCH 11: Deputy Commissioner Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary today chaired a District Level Review Committee (DLRC) meeting to assess the performance of banks and implementation of credit linked government schemes.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Roshan Lal; GM DIC Ravinder Kumar; RBI representative Anil Kumar; LDM Khurshed Ahmed Malik; Director RSETI, CAO, CHO, CAHO, DSHO, DDM NABARD, BDOS, Bankers, and other senior officers.



During the review, it was informed that the Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio in the district has increased by 3%, reaching 68.76% as of December 31, 2024, compared to the previous year (March 2024). An expenditure of 283.93 crore was recorded in the priority sector, achieving 51% of the 551.38 crore Annual Credit Plan (ACP)

target, while the non-priority sector performance stood at 345.27 crore.

The DC directed Bankers to prioritize financial inclusion of women by effectively implementing female-oriented schemes and ensuring handholding support to help them in achieving financial self-reliance. He also emphasized

effective implementation of youth-centric employment schemes. She called upon stakeholder departments to put in extra efforts for effective implementation of employment generation schemes, while instructing banks to provide a detailed scheme-wise report.

He called for swift action on loan cases under MUMKIN, TEJASWANI, PMEGP, PMVISH-WAKARMA and KCC schemes to benefit local youth, along with reviewing the implementation of Prime Minister's Social Security Schemes (PMMY, PMSBY, PMJJBY, and APY) in the district.

SANKALP HEW provides school bags, stationery to girl students

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 11: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan, SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW) on Tuesday provided school bags and stationery items to girl students, here at Government Primary School Phagumrah, reinforcing its commitment to supporting education and women empowerment. Under the guidance of District Social Welfare Officer Zubair Ahmad Lone, the initiative aimed to encourage young girls to pursue their studies without financial hurdles. Addressing the gathering, representatives from SANKALP HEW highlighted the importance of education in empowering women and breaking socio-economic barriers. The school staff and local community members expressed gratitude for the support, acknowledging the positive impact of such efforts on the students' academic journey. The team members of SANKALP commended the initiative and emphasized the role of education in shaping a brighter future for young girls. They encouraged students to focus on their studies and take advantage of the available opportunities. The event concluded with interactive sessions where students shared their aspirations and the organizers assured continued support for their educational growth. KISHTWAR, MARCH 11: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan, SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW) on Tuesday provided school bags and stationery items to girl students.

DC reviews implementation of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme in Samba

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, MARCH 11: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting to review the implementation and progress of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in the district. The meeting was held in the conference hall of the DC office complex. At the beginning, Chief Agriculture Officer S Madan Gopal Singh,

presented a detailed update on the progress across various sectors, highlighting key initiatives such as the promotion of vegetables and exotic vegetables under open and hi-tech protected cultivation, beekeeping, and the development of rainfed areas. He also emphasized efforts to encourage the cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants, alongside promoting millets, mushrooms, commercial floriculture, and oilseed production



to diversify farmers' income sources.

The DDC reviewed the list of eligible beneficiaries under HADP from the Agriculture and Allied Departments who had applied through the HADP portal. A total of 676 beneficiaries have been approved under various programmes aimed at strengthening the agricultural sector.

The DDC urged all stakeholders to work collaboratively towards fostering sustainable agriculture and rural

development in Samba. He also directed banks to prioritize loan cases under HADP, ensuring proper support and guidance to the beneficiaries. The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Smt. Champa Devi, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, and General Manager DIC, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, District Sheep Husbandry Officer.



Gunmen attack Jaffer express in Balochistan

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD, MAR 11 (UND)

Gunmen attacked the Jaffer Express passenger train in Kachhi district of Pakistan's Balochistan province on Tuesday, injuring several people and prompting a security operation in the area, media reports said.

The assault occurred near Ab-e-Gum area of Mach Town, where around six armed men opened fire on the train, spreading panic among passengers, the Express Tribune reported.

Meanwhile, the Baloch Liberation Army claimed responsibility for carrying out what it called a "strategic operation" and claimed that its activists have seized control of the Jaffer Express by derailing it. During the resistance, six military personnel were killed, while over 100 passengers have been taken into BLA custody.

Among the hostages are active-duty personnel from the Pakistani military, police, Anti-Terrorism Force (ATF), and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)—all of whom were traveling to Punjab on leave, the BLA claimed and warned that if the any military tried to intervene, all hostages will be executed.

Pakistani officials said rescue teams and security forces have reached the scene, and an operation is underway to track down the assailants.

Railway officials confirmed that the train's driver sustained serious injuries, and an emergency relief train has been dispatched to assist.

Following the attack, authorities halted Karachi-bound Bolan Mail at Sibi, along with the Peshawar-Quetta Jaffer Express, as a precautionary measure. The Sibi hospital has declared an emergency, anticipating further casualties. UNI XC GNK SSP

Immigration bill introduced in LS, Opposition claims legislation violates fundamental rights

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 11 (UND)

Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai introduced The Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday amid demands from the Congress and other Opposition parties that the legislation be withdrawn as it violated fundamental rights.

The opposition also demanded the bill be referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)/

Congress member Manish Tewari said the bill "is a violation of our fundamental rights on many counts".

"Either this bill should be withdrawn or should be referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for very careful consideration, because it violates multiple articles of the fundamental rights under the Constitution of India," he said.

He said the provisions of the bill can be potentially misused by any government of the day if it feels that the political views or the ideological beliefs of any individual or conscientious dissenter do not conform to the views of the incumbent establishment.

TMC member Saugata Roy also criticised the bill, arguing that its provisions are too stringent for foreigners. He further pointed out the absence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah in the House.

In response, Rai stated that concerns had been raised regarding the legislative competence of the bill. However, he asserted that the bill aligns with the legislative authority and falls within the provisions of the Indian Constitution.

He said the bill is not intended to bar any foreigner but rather to ensure adherence to the country's laws. He emphasised that it is the government's duty to safeguard the nation's security, progress, sovereignty and overall safety.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla later sought the House's opinion on the proposal to introduce the bill, which was approved by a voice vote. UNI RBE SSP

Centre revokes suspension of Wrestling Federation of India

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 11 (UND)

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports on Monday revoked the suspension of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), restoring its recognition as the National Sports Federation (NSF) with immediate effect. The decision ensures Indian wrestlers' participation in upcoming international events, including the 2026 Asian Games and the 2028 Olympics.

The WFI had been suspended on December 24, 2023, due to governance lapses, including violations of the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011, and a lack of transparency in operations. In response, an Ad-hoc Committee appointed by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) had taken over the federation's responsibilities.

PM Modi gifts Banarasi saree, makhana, holy water from Maha Kumbh to Mauritius President, wife

AGENCIES

PORT LOUIS/NEW DELHI, MAR 11 (UND)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted a Banarasi silk saree in a Sadeli box to Mauritius First Lady Vrinda Gokhool, and gifted makhana, a traditional food from Bihar, to Mauritius President Dharambeer Gokhool, during their meeting in the State House in Port Louis today.

The Banarasi saree, originating from Varanasi, is known for its fine silk and zari work, while the Sadeli box from Gujarat features intricate inlay craftsmanship. PM Modi also gifted holy

water from the Sangam from the Maha Kumbh in a Brass and Copper Pot to Mauritius President Dharambeer Gokhool, as well as a Ganesha statue.

According to a statement, "The two leaders exchanged views on deepening the special and close bilateral ties between India and Mauritius.

"In this context, they recalled the shared history between the two countries and the existence of strong people-to-people linkages.

"Prime Minister Modi noted that it was an honour for him to attend the National Day celebra-

tions of Mauritius as Chief Guest for the second time. In a special gesture Prime Minister handed over OCI cards to President Gokhool and First Lady Vrinda Gokhool.

"Prime Minister also visited the Ayurveda Garden in the State House, established in collaboration with the Government of India. Prime Minister noted that Mauritius is an important partner for India in advancing the benefits of traditional medicine including Ayurveda.

"After the talks, President Gokhool hosted a State lunch in honour of Prime Minister."

Speaking at the luncheon, PM Modi praised the taste of the "Mauritius thali" cuisine, and said it reflects the composite culture of the Indian Ocean island nation.

He said the thali also reflects the shared history of both nations, and that their bilateral friendship is also reflected in the hospitality of Mauritius.

Thanking President Dharambeer Gokhool and First Lady Vrinda Gokool, the PM reiterated India's commitment to its friendly ties with Mauritius.

The MEA spokesperson posted on X:

"At the State House, PM @narendramodi was warmly received by President Mr. Dharambeer Gokhool of Mauritius. President also hosted a state lunch in the honour of PM.

"The leaders exchanged views on deepening bilateral ties between India and Mauritius that is anchored in shared history, civilizational linkages & ever growing people to people ties.

"PM also visited the Ayurvedic Garden at the State House, a symbol of India-Mauritius collaboration in traditional medicine."

Once stronghold of mafia Prayagraj transforms into model city: Yogi

AGENCIES

LUCKNOW, MAR 11 (UND)

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said Prayagraj, once dominated by the mafia and criminals, has evolved into a model city in recent years while highlighting the transformative impact of Maha Kumbh on the city.

During a conclave held at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan in Lucknow, the CM said that Prayagraj has undergone complete transformation with major development projects giving the historic city a modern identity. He also attributed this change to the linking of faith and economy through Maha Kumbh.

Meanwhile, he felicitated sanitation workers, showering them with flowers at the event. Calling them the foundation of cleanliness, he said, "They have successfully brought the message of a Swachh Kumbh to life."

Yogi lauded the first public event felicitating sanitation workers, calling it a truly commendable initiative. He emphasised the crucial role of sanitation workers in making the



Maha Kumbh a grand and divine success.

He said, "After any work is completed, people often move on, thinking about the next task. While everyone lives in a building, the foundation stones are forgotten. But the sanitation workers who strengthened the foundation of Maha Kumbh deserve recognition. Their efforts made this event possible and this programme to honour them is truly heartwarming."

Highlighting the power of collective effort, the CM said, "Any event reaches great heights only when people come together with a shared vision. When we view collective efforts positively, they become an inspiration for society. This is exactly what happened in Prayagraj."

He shared how people from countries like the US, Australia, Canada and the UK called, expressing their desire to bring their elderly parents to the Kumbh for a holy dip. He emphasised the importance of cleanliness and security.

He said, "Everyone who attended Mahakumbh appreciated the sanitation and security personnel. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a vision that our events should provide inner satisfaction to people, because cleanliness is the first measure of inner peace and behaviour is the second."

Yogi pointed towards the historic success of Maha Kumbh, highlighting the unwavering faith of devotees. He said that over 66.30 crore pilgrims visited in just 45 days and

shared statistics of the crowd turnout on each holy bath.

Criticising misinformation and negative narratives, he said, "The more people spread rumours and negativity, the more devotees flocked to Prayagraj with even greater determination."

The CM narrated an incident where a YouTuber tried to highlight the difficulties faced by devotees but was met with a resolute response. "A YouTuber asked a devotee from Karnataka how far he had walked and he replied, 'five kilometres'. The YouTuber then informed him that he had another five kilometres to go. The devotee responded, 'Even if I have to walk 50 km, I will,'" he said.

He said, "When the YouTuber suggested that the government should have arranged better facilities, the devotee replied, 'I am walking, so why is it bothering you? Reaching God's abode on foot is a form of devotion for me.'"

Yogi mentioned that Sanatan Dharma is rooted in gratitude and every visitor considered Maha Kumbh as their own

event, rather than just a government-organised festival. "This was the largest human gathering in history, sending a powerful message to the world. It demonstrated that such massive events can be successfully managed, that faith can be linked to livelihoods and that millions of lives can be transformed," he said. He recalled his visit to Prayagraj on February 27, after the completion of the event. "Along with both Deputy CMs, I led a cleanliness drive as a gesture of gratitude to Maa Ganga. We performed a ritual in her honour, acknowledging that her blessings made this grand event possible. Sanitation workers were honoured, shared a meal with us and we pledged to improve their wages. Their revised minimum salary will take effect in April and a bonus has also been announced," he said. The CM urged sanitation and contract workers to ensure their children receive proper education. "Send your children to school. If you have any bad habits, don't let them pass on to your kids. Educate them well and work with dedication," he said.

EC invites party presidents, senior leaders for interaction to strengthen electoral processes

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 11 (UND)

The Elections Commission of India (ECI) has invited suggestions from all national and state political parties by April 30 to strengthen the election process.

As per the notification, the Commission has called for an interaction with the party presidents and seniors to further strengthen the electoral processes in accordance with the established law.

This comes after the opposition parties raised questions over the duplicity in some electors' photo identity cards after the Maharashtra polls.

Earlier, during an ECI conference last week, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar had instructed CEOs, DEOs and EROs of all states and UTs to hold regular interactions with political parties, resolve any suggestions received in such meetings strictly within the legal framework.

The Commission has also urged political parties to proactively use this mechanism of decentralised engagement.

Himachal Assembly passes Rs 17,053.78 cr supplementary budget for 2024-25

AGENCIES

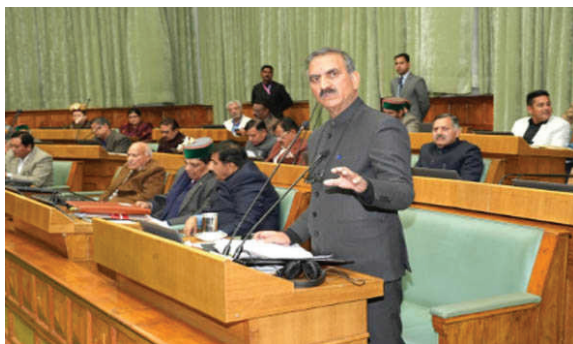
SHIMLA, MAR 11 (UND)

The Himachal Pradesh Assembly on Tuesday passed a supplementary budget of Rs 17,053.78 crore for the financial year 2024-25.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, who holds the portfolio of finance, presented the first and final installment of the supplementary budget, which was approved without discussion.

The House also passed the Himachal Pradesh Appropriation Bill, granting the government authority to utilise these funds.

Out of the total amount, Rs 15,776.19 crore is allocated for state schemes, while Rs 1,277.59 crore is designated for centrally sponsored schemes. The key allocations under state schemes include Rs 10,137.07 crore for wage and means advances and overdraft payments, Rs 1,033.63 crore for power generation and infrastructure repair, and Rs



814.94 crore as subsidies for fare concessions and electric bus purchases for Himachal Road Transport Corporation. Additionally, Rs 763.26 crore has been allocated for pensions and retirement benefits, Rs 455.91 crore for medical colleges and healthcare schemes, and Rs 329.44 crore for water supply and sanitation projects.

Furthermore, Rs 303.67 crore is earmarked for disaster relief, Rs 173.25 crore for tourism development, Rs 150.19 crore for school infrastructure repair, and Rs 142.83 crore for grants to rural local bodies. Other allocations include Rs 135.88 crore for road and bridge con-

struction, Rs 130.16 crore for women's hostels and welfare schemes, Rs 127.77 crore for government buildings, and Rs 124.50 crore for railway projects.

Under centrally sponsored schemes, major allocations include Rs 296.56 crore for the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Rs 207.71 crore for disaster management, Rs 207.23 crore for compensation to Renuka Dam displaced families, Rs 90.28 crore for rural housing, and Rs 53.39 crore for MGNREGA. The supplementary budget was passed by voice vote, ensuring funding for key development projects and welfare programs.

DMK MPs hold protest against Dharmendra Pradhan over his remarks on NEP, demands apology

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 11 (UND)

DMK MPs on Tuesday held protest against Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and demanded "apology" over his remark in Parliament on NEP and the three-language formula.

All DMK MPs sported black dresses in protest against and termed as "offensive and undemocratic".

Speaking to the media, DMK MP Kanimozhi said, "The Union Govt is withholding the money that has to be given to Tamil Nadu, saying that we have to sign the three-language policy and the NEP. They are ruining the future of the children of Tamil Nadu. They have no right to withhold the funds which have to come to the children of Tamil Nadu" he added.

"Yesterday, he responded in a very abusive way, saying that we are dishonest and that the people of Tamil Nadu are uncivilised. This is not the language we expect



him to be speaking. This is totally undemocratic. We expect an apology" she added.

On Thursday, while responding to the New Education Policy and three language row.

Dharmendra Pradhan said, "They (Tamil Nadu) are uncivilised, undemocratic people and not committed to the Tamil Nadu students. They are ruining their future. They are dishonest to the people of Tamil Nadu."

DMK MP Tiruchi Siva called the statement of Dharmendra Pradhan "misleading" and said it is unethical and unparliamentary. We are also against three-language policy. Nobody can

impose it on us."

"Tamil Nadu Education Minister already clarified it...we are wearing black today and going to have a demonstration condemning the observations made by him" he said.

Congress also jumped into the issue. Karti Chidambaram said, "Tamil Nadu is very clear that a two-language curriculum serves us very well. Tamil preserves our identity and is our mother tongue, English is our link language to the world... we don't need a 3rd compulsory language...The Minister should have apologised, he withdrew it but he should have apologised too."

Connection Between Food and Worship



DR. TASADUK HUSSAIN ITTOO
FELLOW, INTERNATIONAL DIABETES
FEDERATION(BELGIUM)

Food has a great significance in Islam. It is associated with one’s relationship with Almighty Allah. The physical body is a gift from Almighty Allah; it is given to humans as an amanah (in trust) to take care of for a fixed period. How much food one consumes and the choice of food has a direct impact on the physical and spiritual well-being of the person. It affects one’s behaviour and personality. Generally, wholesome, natural and healthy food assists the development of a good personality.

Overeating has long been avoided in Islam as it is thought to increase worldly appetites and cause sluggishness, thereby ‘dulling’ the soul, ham-

pering spiritual growth and increasing physical ailments. Chapter 20, verse 81 of the Qur’an states, “Eat of the good and wholesome things that We have provided for your sustenance, but indulge in no excess therein.” The blessed Prophet said, “The children of Adam fill no vessel worse than their stomach. Sufficient for him is a few morsels to keep his back straight. If he must eat more, then one-third should be for his food, one-third for his drink, and one-third left for air...” (Sunan al-Tirmidhi).

Islam sees health and ‘well-being’ as much more than just bodily health -- well-being or tranquillity requires a strong relationship with one’s spirituality, good physical health, mental happiness, a sense of purpose and good character and relationships. Islam makes a strong connection between food and worship and teaches that all forms of worship have a deeper purpose and impact and contribute in some way to individual and social well-being. In chapter 7, verse 31 the Qur’an is categorical, “Eat and drink freely, but waste not by excess, for He does not like the wasteful.”



Islam therefore creates a sense of responsibility in people to take a healthy living lifestyle as normal. Fasting in the month of Ramadan teaches us to manage and practise spirituality and not to eat excessively. The essential part of spirituality in food is that we are grateful and thankful for the food we get. The blessed Prophet Muhammad (SAW) once said, “Allah has a right over you; your body has a right over you...”

To strike a balance between the needs of the physical body and one’s spiritual needs, one must on the one hand consume

the right type and amount of food and on the other hand develop excellent interpersonal skills. Fasting in the month of Ramadan is an opportunity to make significant changes in one’s lifestyle and develop the resolve to make healthy living choices.

The diet should be simple and not differ too much from one’s normal everyday diet. It should contain foods from all the major food groups - like fruits and vegetables; bread, other cereals and potatoes; milk and meat; fish and dairy food alternatives; foods containing fat and foods contain-

ing sugar.

SUHOOR -- the pre-dawn meal, should be a wholesome, moderate meal that is filling and provides enough energy for many hours. It is therefore particularly important to include slowly-digesting foods in the Suhoor. For example, complex carbohydrates are foods that will help release energy slowly during the long hours of fasting. Complex carbohydrates are found in grains and seeds, like barley, wheat, oats, millets, semolina, beans, lentils, wholemeal flour, basmati rice, etc. Fibre-rich foods are also digested slowly and

include bran, cereals, whole wheat, grains and seeds, potatoes with the skin, vegetables such as green beans and almost all fruit, including apricots, prunes, figs, etc.

IFTAR -- is the meal which breaks the day’s fast. This meal could include dates, following the Prophetic traditions. Dates will provide a refreshing burst of much-needed energy. Natural fruit juices will also have a similar, revitalising effect. The meal should remain a meal and not become a feast.

Many of the foods which are mentioned and encouraged in the Holy Qur’an, and the Sunnah (the Prophetic traditions) also correspond to modern guidelines on a healthy diet and will help to maintain balanced, healthy meals in Ramadan. The most commonly consumed foods by Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) were milk, dates, lamb/mutton and oats. Healthy foods mentioned in the Holy Qur’an are fruit and vegetables, such as olives, onions, cucumber, figs, dates, grapes as well as pulses such as lentils. The encouragement of fish can be seen in the fact that Islamic law spares fish from any spe-

cific slaughter requirements, making it easy to incorporate fish in a meal.

Foods to avoid are the heavily-processed, fast-burning foods that contain refined carbohydrates in the form of sugar, white flour, etc., as well as, of course, too much fatty food (e.g. fried cakes, biscuits, chocolates and sweets). It may also be worth avoiding the caffeine content in drinks such as tea, coffee and cola. (Caffeine is a diuretic and stimulates faster water loss through urination.)

CONCLUSION

The fasts of Ramadan can improve a person’s health - if the correct diet is followed. To fully benefit from fasting, a person should spare a great deal of thought to the type and quantity of food they will consume through the blessed month. Overeating can not only harm the body, but it also interferes with a person’s spiritual growth during the month. A diet that is sufficiently balanced will keep a person healthy and active during the month of Ramadan.

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Sleep debt, night shifts can raise risk of infections: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Sleep debt and night shifts increase the risk of several common infections, according to a study on Monday.

According to researchers from Norway, sleep debt, defined as the gap between sleep need and actual sleep duration, increased infection risk in a dose-dependent manner.

The study, published in the journal Chronobiology International, examined the effects of sleep patterns and shift work on the immune system among 1,335 nurses from Norway.

The findings showed that shift work -- particularly night shifts -- was associated with a higher risk of several infections, including the common cold. The risk of pneumonia/bronchitis was 129 per cent higher for nurses with moderate sleep debt and 288 per cent for severe



sleep debt.

Both sinusitis and gastrointestinal infections also showed higher risks with increasing levels of sleep debt.

"These findings highlight the need for tailored interventions to reduce infection risks among healthcare workers," said Siri Waage, from the

Norwegian Competence Center for Sleep Disorders, Haukeland University Hospital, Bergen.

"Sleep debt and irregular shift patterns, including night work, not only compromise nurses' immune health but could also impact their ability to provide high-quality patient care," Waage added.

In the study, the participants -- mostly female nurses (90.4 per cent), with an average age of 41.9 years -- reported their sleep duration, sleep needs, shift work patterns, and how often they had experienced specific infections over the past three months.

Nurses with moderate sleep debt (one to 120 minutes less sleep than needed) had a 33 per cent higher risk of the common cold, while those with severe sleep debt (more than two hours) had more than double compared to those with no sleep debt.

The analysis also revealed that night work was linked with an increased risk of the common cold, but was not associated with any of the other infections examined. The study emphasises the importance of adequate sleep and shift management in reducing susceptibility to infection.

Study explains why firefighters may face a higher brain cancer risk

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Firefighters with increased exposure to certain chemical compounds are more likely to develop gliomas -- the most common type of malignant brain tumour -- than individuals with other occupations, according to a study on Monday.

The study, published in the peer-reviewed journal CANCER, suggests a greater likelihood of haloalkane-associated mutations in firefighters with gliomas than in other patients with this type of brain cancer.

The gene mutations make up a mutational pattern or "signature" that other investigators previously associated with exposure to haloalkanes -- used in flame retardants, fire extinguishants, refrigerants, and other products.

"As firefighters have exposure to such chemical agents, we examined mutational signatures in glioma



brain tumours diagnosed in persons who worked as firefighters versus those who did not," said Elizabeth B. Claus, Professor at the Yale University School of Public Health.

The study followed 35 participants, of which 17 had an occupational history of firefighting. Compared with the other 18 participants, firefighters were more likely to have the haloalkane-associated mutational signature, especially if they had been

firefighters for many years, the study showed.

Among non-firefighters, the mutational signature was more likely in those with occupations that also possibly exposed them to haloalkanes, such as car painting and machine maintenance.

"Our study provides preliminary data but will need confirmation in a larger data set and across a wider range of occupations," said Dr. Claus. "Identifying exposure to

such mutational agents is important to inform public health intervention strategies and pinpoint occupational hazards that may be avoidable," the researcher added.

Glioma is the most common malignant primary brain tumour and is associated with significant morbidity and mortality. The malignant brain tumour develops in the glial cells that surround neurons, affecting motor and neurological abilities and functions.

It also impacts cognitive functions and may also affect the personality of the patient. People of all ages, including children, adolescents, and young adults are at risk of gliomas.

Notably, it represents about 20 per cent of all brain and central nervous system (CNS) tumours and is considered rare cancer because it affects less than 6 out of 100,000 persons every year.

Indian pharma market to grow 8-9 per cent in FY26: Report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Indian pharmaceuticals market is expected to grow 8-9 per cent year-on-year in FY26, according to a report on Monday.

The report by India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said the growth in the sector will be at 7.5-8.0 per cent year on year for FY25.

This is "against 6.5 per cent year-on-year in FY24 and 9.9 per cent YoY growth in FY23," said Krishnanath Munde, associate director at India Ratings and Research.

In February, the pharma market delivered revenue of 7.5 per cent year on year. This growth was driven by growth in price (5.2 per cent YoY) and new launches (2.4 per cent YoY), while volume growth continued to remain muted at negative 0.2 per cent YoY, the report said.

The sector reported growth at an average of 7.3 per cent year-to-date



(YTD) in FY25. This was led by price growth (5.5 per cent), new launches growth (2.7 per cent), and volume growth.

Further, the moving annual total (MAT) -- or the 12-month rolling sales of

overall pharma products -- saw an 8.1 per cent surge in February, the report said. Cardiac therapies outperformed growth in the pharma market with 10.8 per cent growth in MAT and a 13.7 per cent

increase in monthly market share. This was followed by gastroenterology, neurology/Central Nervous System, and dermatology.

On the other hand, anti-infectives, respiratory, and gynaecology therapies saw a weak growth in February, the report said.

Meanwhile, another recent report showed that the pharma sector in the country is witnessing rapid production growth. The Indian pharma sector has grown at 8 per cent CAGR and has also seen a 9 per cent increase in export rates in 2024, according to the report by McKinsey & Company.

Expanding its capabilities in APIs and biotechnology, it has grown at 8 per cent CAGR, twice the global average. The country also emerged as the world's largest supplier of generic medicines, with a 9 per cent pharma export growth rate, nearly double the global average, the report said.

AGENCIES
NEW YORK

Engaging in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity like walking may be key to warding off death risk among postmenopausal women with a history of cancer, according to a study.

The study showed that more daily steps and more moderate-to-vigorous physical activity were associated with a progressively lower risk of all-cause mortality. The greatest benefit was seen among participants who logged 5,000-6,000 steps per day, and their risk of all-cause mortality was reduced by 40 per cent.

Each additional 2,500 steps per day was also incrementally associated with a 34 per cent reduction in risk of death from cardiovascular disease. Cancer survivors are at an increased risk of death from cardiovascular disease. According to the American Heart Association,



tion, exercise training is an essential part of cardiac rehabilitation and recovery after cancer treatment. Exercise therapy can help to reduce cardiovascular toxicity during cancer treatment.

"Encouraging cancer survivors to be more active, sit less, and take more steps every day could be a feasible approach for prolonging survivorship and reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease mortality," said lead author Eric Hyde, a research analyst at the University of California, San Diego.

"Our study helps us to better understand poten-

tial physical activity behaviors of postmenopausal women in relation to cancer survival," he added.

The study followed nearly 2,500 postmenopausal women between the ages of 63 and 99 years for about eight years with a history of cancers of breast, endometrial, colon, lungs, bladder, rectal, ovarian, and kidney, among others. The greatest benefit from moderate-to-vigorous physical activity was seen among participants with at least one hour per day, which reduced all-cause mortality risk by 40 per cent and cardiovascular disease mortality risk by 60 per

cent.

However, significant reductions in risk were also evident at amounts far below one hour per day, the researchers noted. Every 102 minutes of sitting time per day was associated with a 12 per cent increased risk of all-cause mortality and a 30 per cent higher risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

"Risk reductions were even evident when participants walked fewer than 5,000 steps per day, half of the often touted 10,000 steps per day threshold," Hyde said.

"Daily steps are an important measure because they are easily understood by the public, can be at any intensity level, and are recorded on wearable devices like smartwatches that are increasingly being worn by all."

The research was presented at the American Heart Association's meeting held in New Orleans, US.



Rohit Sharma reflects on India's Next-Gen dominance

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 11 (UNI)

India captain Rohit Sharma said the way his India side made it undefeated through the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 is indicative of their passion and commitment - and it bodes well for the future.

Asked whether he agreed that the team could dominate international cricket over the next decade, Rohit talked about how the set-up has been created in order to support the progress of young talent.

"That is the whole point," he said. "You want to create your bench strength while you're playing. Whenever we had the opportunity in the last



four or five years, we've always tried to give opportunities to all these players. They've grabbed it."

He added that young players were shining across all formats of the game, giving rise to plenty of debates around selec-

tion.

"When you are discussing about which player to pick, who to drop, who's going to miss out on the opening eleven, that tells you there is so much depth in this team," Rohit said.

On the white-ball front,

the side look forward to two global events in the next two years, with a T20 World Cup on home soil (and co-hosted by Sri Lanka) in early 2026 and a Cricket World Cup in 2027.

While hoping at least at this stage to be a part of both teams, Rohit believes the platform has been set for the side to continue on as a force.

"I can surely say that Indian cricket for the future is in very, very safe hands, looking at how the players are coming up, how they want to take that responsibility, how much hunger is there," he said.

"The passion, the talent, all of that is there. It's just about now going out there and doing it," Rohit added.

New Zealand slot in new trio to address injury concerns for Sri Lanka T20Is

AGENCIES

WELLINGTON, MAR 11 (UNI)

New Zealand women are set to take on Sri Lanka in a three-game T20I series starting March 14.

Injuries to wicketkeeper-batter Izzy Gaze [a hip flexor issue], seamer Hayley Jensen [a hip flexor issue], and batter Bella James [quadriple concerns] have ruled them out of the upcoming series.

Izzy had featured in the ODIs against Sri Lanka.

"We're all feeling for Izzy, Hayley, and Bella," White Ferns head coach Ben Sawyer said. "It's disappointing for the team and the players, but I know those three have the determination and resil-



ience to bounce back."

This means call up for wicketkeeper-batter Polly Inglis, left-arm seamer Bree Illing, and allrounder Flora Devonshire have replaced them. Polly and Illing have featured in three Women's ODIs each - incidentally making their debuts in the preceding three-game ODI series against Sri Lanka, while

Flora is yet to make her international debut.

The White Ferns head coach Ben Sawyer was excited at the prospect of the three youngsters joining the lineup.

"Bree and Polly had a really positive start to their ODI career. They both showed great intent and execution and I'm confident they're ready

to take on this next challenge," he said.

"Flora's shown a lot of all-round potential at the domestic level and is another exciting young player that has qualities consistent with what we're looking for in the White Ferns," Sawyer said.

New Zealand are arriving into the shortest format series on the back of winning the three-game ODI series against the Island nation, 2-0, after the first game was washed out.

Squad: Suzie Bates (c), Maddy Green, Polly Inglis, Georgia Plimmer, Izzy Sharp, Brooke Halliday, Emma McLeod, Eden Carson, Bree Illing, Fran Jonas, Jess Kerr, Rosemary Mair, Flora Devonshire.

Australia & England to play historic 150th anniversary Test at MCG

AGENCIES

SYDNEY, MAR 11 (UNI)

Arch-rivals Australia and England will play a historic one-off day-night Test match to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first Test match.

The historic pink-ball Test between the two will be played between March 11-15, 2027 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, a statement from Cricket Australia confirmed on Tuesday.

This will make it the first instance of Australia's men's team playing a pink-ball Test at the MCG.

Earlier this year, Australia women had contested in the first-ever day-night



Test at the venue, coincidentally against England in the Women's Ashes.

MCG is also the venue where Australia and England had played the Centenary Test back in 1977, with the hosts emerging victorious by 45 runs.

The two rivals had played a second centenary

Test in 1980 at the Lord's Cricket Ground to commemorate the first test between the two nations in England back in 1880, an ICC report said.

"The 150th Anniversary Test at the MCG will be one of the great cricket events and playing under lights

will be a fantastic way to celebrate both our game's rich heritage and Test cricket's modern evolution," Todd Greenberg, Cricket Australia CEO stated.

"It will also help ensure more people are able to attend and watch what will be a fantastic occasion," he said.

"The Centenary Test created many iconic performances including David Hookes' five consecutive boundaries off Tony Greig, Rick McCosker batting with a broken jaw and Derek Randall's defiant century, and I'm sure the 150th Test will create its own lifelong memories," Greenberg added.

Sri Lanka all-rounder Chamari Athapaththu makes leap in latest ICC Player Rankings

AGENCIES

DUBAI, MAR 11 (UNI)

Sri Lanka's seasoned campaigner Chamari Athapaththu moved up two spots in the latest ICC Women's ODI Player Rankings.

Athapaththu, who was part of Sri Lanka's squad in the recent ODI series in New Zealand, overtook Black Ferns veteran Sophie Devine to share the seventh spot with Australia's Annabel Sutherland.



The Sri Lankan all-

rounder scored 25 runs and snapped three wickets

during the series but was unable to take her team across the line as New Zealand captured a 2-0 win.

Elsewhere, India's Deepti Sharma overtook Amelia Kerr to climb up one spot in the all-rounders rankings and now occupies the fifth spot, the ICC reported.

In the ODI batting rankings, Nat Sciver-Brunt is now third in the tally, having overtaken Athapaththu for the spot.

Deepika & Araiyeet Singh honoured to be nominated for Hockey India Annual Awards

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 11 (UNI)

Rising hockey stars Deepika and Araiyeet Singh Hundal have expressed their delight after being nominated for the prestigious Hockey India 7th Annual Awards 2024.

The two young players, who have made a significant impact in their respective teams, have been shortlisted for the Hockey India Asunta Lakra Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Women - Under 21) and Hockey India Jugraj Singh Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Men - Under 21) respectively.

Deepika, a key contributor to the Indian women's team's success in 2024-25, was also part of the gold medal-winning squads at the Jharkhand Women's Asian Champions Trophy Ranchi 2023 and the Bihar Women's Asian Champions Trophy Rajgir 2024.

Deepika also finished as the third-highest goalscorer in women's hockey in 2024 with 17 goals

under her belt from 26 games, behind only Yibbi Jansen (29 goals) of the Netherlands and Ambre Ballenghien (19 goals) of Belgium.

She also finished the



Asian Champions Trophy 2024 and Jr Women's Asia Cup as the top scorer with 11 and 12 goals under her name respectively. She also netted three goals during the just-concluded India leg of FIH Hockey Pro League.

Interestingly, Deepika's all three goals (first against England, which India won 3-2, second against Germany, which India won 1-0, and third against the mighty Dutch, which India won in a shootout) came in matches that India won.

Reflecting on the honour of being nominated, she said, "Being nominated for this award

is a proud moment for me. Winning gold medals in consecutive Asian Champions Trophy tournaments has been a special experience, and this nomination is another encouragement to keep pushing myself and improving my game."

She further added, "Awards like these motivate young players to stay focused and work harder.

I am happy that my performances have been recognised, and I am grateful for the support of my teammates and coaches."

Araiyeet, who won this award last year as well, went on to feature for

the Indian Men's Hockey Team and played a key role in their gold medal-winning campaign at the Asian Champions Trophy China 2024.

Reflecting on his journey, he shared, "Last year when I received the award I was really pleased, and it motivated me to work harder and push myself. It also gave me the confidence that I can become a part of the senior team and do well for India."

He further added, "I am very happy to be nominated again, this was an important year for me, with the Asian Champions Trophy being the highlight for me. For young players, it is very motivating and regardless of who wins, I am happy that my efforts are recognised."

The Hockey India 7th Annual Awards 2024, scheduled for March 15 in New Delhi, will celebrate outstanding performances from the 2024 season, featuring a record prize pool of approximately INR 12 crores.

The event will also commemorate the 50th anniversary of India's historic 1975 World Cup victory and mark 100 years of Indian hockey's affiliation with the International Hockey Federation (FIH).

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